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A SHORT HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

"A SILENT MEETING"

The Meeting-house is Jordans, where Penn, Ellwood and other early Friends worshipped

(From a painting by F. Walter West, R.W.S.)

A SHORT HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

(EARLIER PERIODS)

BY

ELIZABETH BRAITHWAITE EMMOTT

With INTRODUCTION *by*

RUFUS M. JONES, M.A., D.Litt.

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"THE hour is opportune for reviewing the brave story of the early Quaker movement now that all serious thought is turning to the reconstruction of the Church catholic and of the Social Order. The past is pregnant with lessons for the present, not indeed by prescribing ready-made solutions for our modern problems, but by showing the spirit of dedication and adventure in which these problems must be faced. We lose its inspiration when we think of it as some far-off age untroubled by the spiritual doubts and difficulties that beset us; closer examination shows that it was crowded with its own perplexities and fateful issues, through which those could walk most worthily who fronted the dawn in glad surrender to its light."—W. C. BRAITHWAITE, in Preface to *The Second Period of Quakerism*, 1919, p. v.

PREFACE

A HISTORY of Quakerism which should trace the movement back to its sources, and show its connection with vital, spiritual religion from the earliest times, was planned nearly twenty years ago by John Wilhelm Rowntree. His wish was to recount fully the victorious lives of the first Quaker leaders and to show how the truths they taught had lived and even flourished under persecution, but he would tell also the sad story of controversies and failures and show how quietness and worldly prosperity had deadened the early fervour till the energies of the leaders were directed more towards the maintenance of "ancient testimonies" than towards proclaiming their message to the world.

He devoted a great deal of time and thought during the last years of his life to preparing the material for this history, and when he was so suddenly called home in 1905, before the task was actually begun, some of his friends, notably Rufus M. Jones and William C. Braithwaite, determined so far as possible to carry out his idea of a history which should "adequately exhibit Quakerism as a great experiment in spiritual religion, and should be abreast of the requirements of modern research." [1]

Dr. Rufus M. Jones, Professor of Philosophy at Haverford College, U.S.A., undertook the editorship of the work and has himself written five volumes of the series: *Studies in Mystical Religion* and *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, as introductory to the whole, *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, sections of which are by Isaac Sharpless and Amelia Mott Gummere, and the two concluding volumes, *Later Periods of*

[1] W. C. Braithwaite, Preface to *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. v.

Quakerism, which deal with the history of the years from 1725 to the present time. The history of the early Quaker movement in England has been written by W. C. Braithwaite in two volumes, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* and *The Second Period of Quakerism*, the latter of which carries the history down to about 1725.

The editor of *The Friend* writing in June 1919 says: "There is nothing to approach these books in the whole range of Quaker historical literature—in balance, in learning, in sound and sane judgment, in understanding, in deep spiritual fervour. Longer books there are, the ponderous tomes of the seventeenth century; more devotional books, but nothing more vivid, lucid or purposive. William C. Braithwaite has well earned the high place of first of living Quaker historians, as his friend and colleague is first of Quaker philosophers."

The volumes are full of deep interest, not only for members of our own Society, but for all lovers of truth who would follow the history of religious thought and learn from the victories and failures of the past.

One by one as they have issued from the press I have read these books, and the sense of widening horizons and of spiritual uplift which they have brought have made me wish that all could share them with me. But to read seven volumes of five or six hundred pages each, all solidly packed with illuminating facts and purposeful deductions, takes more time than most people nowadays feel able to spare, and I have felt it laid upon me to make an attempt, imperfect though I know it to be, to bring within smaller compass, for the use of busy people, some of the inspiration of these wonderful pages.

It was impossible to include the whole series in the limits of one volume, and I have therefore only dealt with the first five books, bringing the history down to about 1725. In the concluding chapter on *The Quaker Way of Life* illustrations have, however, been taken from all periods.

It has been necessary to omit a great deal and to group together for purposes of condensation subject matter from different chapters and volumes. My great desire has been to keep as much as possible of the thrilling interest and deep spiritual message which breathes through the originals, and to arouse such an interest in our history that readers of this little book may be induced to read the larger volumes for themselves.

I am very grateful to Rufus M. Jones for writing the Introduction ; and to Norman Penney for correcting the proofs and preparing the Index, as well as to the many others who have given me their advice or suggestions whilst the book has been in course of preparation. Especially do I owe much to the valuable help of my brother, the late W. C. Braithwaite, who read through most of my manuscript, and without whose kind encouragement the book would never have been completed.

ELIZABETH B. EMMOTT.

MEAD LODGE, REIGATE,
October, 1922.

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INTRODUCTION

It gives me pleasure to write a few introductory words to this excellent historical study by Elizabeth B. Emmott. The plan here adopted to cover in a brief and compact way the early period of Quaker history and to deal in a similar way with the forerunners of Quakerism had the strong endorsement of the late William Charles Braithwaite, Elizabeth Emmott's brother, on whose important historical work much of this present volume is based. He felt, as I also have done, that our seven large volumes composing the History planned by John Wilhelm Rowntree deal too extensively and minutely with persons, events and issues for those who have little time for reading and study, and who want brief, direct and compact statement of fact or estimate of values. We always hoped that our books would stimulate the writing of other books covering the same field, and that our accumulation of data would present material for further study. This is a happy instance of the beginning of the fulfilment of that hope.

It is quite remarkable what a strong wave of interest in Quaker history has appeared in recent times both in England and America. For many years previous to the present generation there was almost no bent in this direction. Many of the foremost Quaker leaders in the nineteenth century were extremely weak in historical perspective, while the rank and file of the Quaker membership for the most part held a traditional outlook concerning the birth and development of their faith. The separations which divided the Society of Friends into "branches" and "parties" would not have occurred if the membership, or even the leaders, had been

historically trained. Each faction held its own peculiar tradition as to the views and practices of early Friends, and they all worked with bodies of ideas which had been constructed by reading their own opinions back into the books and writings of the Quaker founders, which is one of the easiest things in the world to do. Terms and phrases came to be used as current coin without adequate effort to recover what the words and experiences had once meant to those who first used them.

This fresh recovery and interpretation have been the tasks of our time. John Stephenson Rowntree and Dr. Thomas Hodgkin were among the first to begin the genuine recovery of our past life. John Wilhelm Rowntree had a vivid sense of its importance, and devoted himself to this work with great enthusiasm and with splendid mental equipment for it.

Meantime, Norman Penney in England and Allen C. Thomas in America had begun their careful, accurate work upon the vast historical material lying at hand for the student. Isaac Sharpless, President of Haverford College, developed a passion for the recovery of the history of colonial Pennsylvania, its founder, and its political leaders. A large number of excellent monographs on Quaker topics have appeared through the labours of Friends and other scholars, and the converging work of many labourers prepared the way for the seven volumes of the Rowntree series which have been issued between 1909 and 1921.

Perhaps no small religious body has ever before possessed such a remarkable collection of material for the historian as has the Society of Friends. Almost every important leader of it, especially in the early period, kept a journal and revealed himself and his problems. Many of them—in fact most of the early pillar Friends—wrote tracts. This collection is legion. Then the wise presiding genius at Swarthmore Hall gathered and preserved the immense collection of letters written by the ministers and missionaries who propagated the Truth in the great creative epoch. Not less important is the precious collection which

Norman Penney edited under the title of *The First Publishers of Truth*, a body of documents of the greatest interest and value which have given us an entirely new insight into the background and the birth of our faith. Then there are almost endless record books, loaded with interesting material for the person who has a flare for historical facts. Again, what amazing collections there are of sufferings, "voluntarily undergone in attestation to the faith" which the sufferers believed. Besse produced a monumental collection of them, but there are plenty more to be found that are not in his huge volumes. The social implications of Quakerism and the experiments made to work out a new way of life offer a field of study so far only touched, but not searched through or anywhere nearly exhausted yet. Each great Quaker personality has left enough material for a lifetime of research, as Albert Cook Myers has found to be the case with William Penn, and Amelia Mott Gummere with John Woolman.

There are two different types of historical work. One is the work of collecting, preserving and reproducing the annals and records of the past. The other is the work of re-interpretation. They are both important, but they indicate a different focus of interest, and they call for quite different talents and equipment. The Society of Friends has been rich in its historians of the first type. It has had fewer of the second type. This is peculiarly the work now needed, and this present volume, together with A. Neave Brayshaw's valuable volume entitled *The Quakers: Their Story and Message*, are good examples of this latter type.

But the reader who enjoys these interesting pages should realize that he has only made a good beginning. There are fields to till beyond these fields and hills to climb beyond these hills. That is the impression which this book purposely gives, and it should send the serious reader to the more extensive treatment now available of the events and problems here dealt with.

It has become a tradition that the so-called mediæval period of Quaker history, the eighteenth and early nineteenth century

period, is dull, flat and uninteresting. It is often treated as a loop to be neglected on the way from the early period to the present day. I do not agree with that view. I find that the mediæval period is a very rich and fertile time. It is crammed with interest, and some day we shall learn to treat it with more respect and insight. I hope that some historians will make it their field and will till it with care.

The twentieth century is admitted by everybody to be both interesting and creative. We are too near it to be historians of it, but one hopes that we shall do as our forerunners did and provide adequate collections of material for the use of coming historians. Here, again, will be large opportunity for the interpreters to show their skill. The actual deeds have not been especially striking or thrilling. The mere record will not grip the reader, but the fresh attempt to exhibit a way of life, something like Christ's way, the determination to translate the spirit of love and fellowship, of sacrifice and service, to the victims of the Great War, especially to the innocent children who were the worst sufferers of all—that will be worth telling to those who are eager for spiritual realities. In any case, we have not come to the end of Quaker history !

RUFUS M. JONES.

HAVERFORD, PENNSYLVANIA.

PART I

THE ANTECEDENTS OF QUAKERISM

"The researches of recent years conclusively show that the movement, known in History as Quakerism, was part of a very much wider religious movement which had for many years been gathering volume and intensity, and which had prepared the way, especially in England, for this particular type of lay-religion.—Dr. Rufus M. Jones, Introduction to *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. xxv.

CHAPTER I

SPIRITUAL RELIGION IN THE EARLY CHURCH AND DURING THE MIDDLE AGES

"Mysticism is a word which cannot properly be used without careful definition. . . . I shall use the word mysticism to express the type of religion which puts the emphasis on immediate awareness of relation with God, on direct and intimate consciousness of the Divine Presence. It is religion in its most acute, intense and living stage."—DR. R. M. JONES, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, Introduction, p. xv.

"The men who have made religion a living power for any people are persons who have been face to face with God, who have heard His voice and felt His presence."—*Brinton's Religions of Primitive People*, p. 52. Quoted in above, p. xvi.

IN writing a history of Quakerism it seems fitting to begin by studying earlier movements which have embodied the Quaker ideal of the inward and spiritual nature of religion and the lives of some of those who bore witness in their day to the possibility of personal touch with the divine, even when the outward Church had so lost her way as to count such witness heresy or blasphemy.

The first two volumes of the Rowntree History—*Studies in Mystical Religion* and *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries*—written by Dr. R. M. Jones, help us to realize something of the debt of gratitude we owe to all these "Friends of God" in the past, by whatever name they called themselves, and remind us that George Fox and the early Friends were not alone in their testimony against external and formal religion, but were in the true apostolic succession with many other faithful witnesses and prophets of the spiritual life in all ages and in many countries.

Dr. R. M. Jones begins by pointing out to us that in following the history of religious thought from the earliest times we become aware that there are two distinct aspects of the truth which appeal to different minds, and that almost all the shipwrecks of Church

life in the past have come from the emphasis being laid too exclusively on one of these to the neglect of the other.

These are :

1. A tendency to regard religion as something outside ourselves, permanent and unchanging. This has produced the historic Church with its traditional beliefs and its priestly system.

2. A tendency to regard it as the continually fresh intercourse between the human and the divine, with inward personal experiences and fresh revelations for the needs of every time and place. This type of religion produces prophets and mystics.

Entirely to ignore either of these aspects and push the other to an extreme must always result in loss. We need a religion whose roots are deeply grounded in eternal and unchanging realities, and we do well to try to preserve its essentials by some organization which shall keep us in touch with the past and be a guide for future generations ; but we must never forget that if religion is to be a living power, ministering to the deepest needs of mankind, there must continually be fresh experiences and revelations to meet the changing conditions and needs of life.

Human nature seems on the whole more liable to err in neglecting the vital, first-hand aspect of religion and blindly following some outward authority ; consequently again and again we find the Church becoming dead and formal, so closely bound down by outward rules as to lose all freedom and true life, and so overshadowed by the seeming importance of forms and ceremonies as to forget to look beyond these to the spiritual realities of which they were only intended to be the types and reminders. Then in the darkest hour of forgetfulness and superstition some prophet has been raised up who has seen right through the shadows to the substance, and whose burning words have shrivelled up all that was false and unreal and led men back to the living God and His word within their own souls.

We meet with instances of this from the very earliest times. Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah and many other names of Old Testament Saints will immediately occur to us, and besides these there were many outside the Jewish nation who "sought the Lord if haply they might feel after Him and find Him," and who bore witness in the midst of a materialistic world to the supreme value of spiritual things.

It was to a small group of such waiting and seeking souls—a small group which was itself part of a small nation specially chosen by God as a channel of spiritual light and knowledge to the world—that Christ came, to make known that which the mystics and seekers of all ages had longed after, viz. the revelation of God and the possibility of union between God and man—in short, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The seeming defeat of Calvary was turned into victory by the Resurrection, and thenceforward the disciples lived in the assurance of the presence with them of their risen Saviour, and in the joy of His overcoming power.

We look back to the days of the apostles as the "golden age" of Christianity, but a little thought shows us that then as now there was no single, well-defined type of belief. Even then one said, "I am of Paul," another "I of Apollos" and another "I of Cephas." The strength of Christianity consisted, not in conformity to creeds and dogmas, but in the power of Jesus Christ to lead men to God so that henceforward they lived their own life *with Him*. "Primitive Christianity was above all *a way of living*, and it exhibited, as life always does, freedom, variety, personality." Its greatest characteristic was an intense realization of the divine Presence, and its earliest exponents—John, Peter, James, Paul and the rest—were all men whose experience of divine realities was first-hand.

In the Book of Acts we find how the early disciples were bound together by the experiences which they shared of their love to the Lord Jesus and their realization of His presence rather than by any external Church organization. They formed a fellowship rather than a Church. Their meetings were held in the large family room of some private house, where also the common meal was eaten, and the community was formed to a great extent on the model of the family. Very soon, however, besides the open enemies in the heathen world outside them, the little band of Christians was harassed by foes within, and it seemed to many that the only way to combat the errors around them and to preserve the purity of their faith was to have a fixed creed, and ordained priests and bishops who should administer the sacraments of the Church and be the guardians of her faith.

By the end of the second century the free family life and

communal worship of the early days had been replaced by a rigid ecclesiastical system.

The Montanist movement was an attempt to restore spiritual religion. Its followers called themselves "The Church of the Spirit" and emphasized the progressive character of revelation and their belief that the Spirit had now come and was speaking directly through men. They took a strong stand against war and were fearless in suffering for their faith. Tertullian (A.D. circ. 145–220), one of the greatest churchmen of the day, was favourable to them, but in spite of his powerful support the movement failed through the over-importance attached by its leaders to ecstatic vision, and the extreme asceticism and impracticability of the views they advocated.

With the exception of Tertullian most of the Church Fathers in their desire to safeguard the true faith favoured the establishment of Church authority and ritual. In their writings we find sometimes the traditional and sometimes the mystical type of thought prevailing, and often both aspects emphasized by one and the same person in seeming contradiction. Augustine is perhaps the most remarkable example of this. He was the man who, more than any other, forged the iron system of Church dogma and authority, but was also the one who has given us the most wonderful records of his own first-hand knowledge of divine things. He taught that since the fall, man is born in sin and depravity; that salvation depends entirely on external channels; that God of His own will determines the destiny of "everything from angel to worm" and that there is "no salvation outside the Church"; but in his *Confessions*, his *City of God* and other writings we come face to face with the man's own human, personal experiences, which strike a very different note. The well-known sentence in the opening chapter of the *Confessions*, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O God, and our heart is restless until it rests in Thee," at once grounds religion in the very nature of the soul itself and destroys the depravity doctrine of the theologian.

It is strange to find this man, whom we associate with the doctrine of election, making the *will*—the "momentous will" as he calls it—the way to God! Yet in his *Confessions* he says: "Thither [i.e. toward God] one journeyeth not in ships, nor in chariots, nor on foot; for to journey thither, nay, even to arrive there, is nothing else but *to will to* go. And again, "*To will God entirely is to have Him.*"

With the writings of St. Augustine we reach the close of the fourth century, and if we now turn our attention for a time to the most western extremity of Europe, we shall find Christianity already planted there, and shall henceforward see spiritual leaders from these distant shores also bearing their part as witnesses to the essential nearness of God to man. The first planting of Christianity in Ireland belongs to the dim region of legendary story, but it seems certain that amongst its first founders was St. Patrick, known to all the world as the patron saint of Ireland. It is said that "Patricius," when a lad of sixteen, was brought from his home in Gaul by Celtic pirates. For ten years he was a slave, a keeper of flocks, but he tells us in his *Confessions* that even in those days of slavery, amidst the frost and snow, he felt no ill, "nor," says he, "was there any sloth within me, because the Spirit was burning within me." After ten years he fled and succeeded in reaching his native land. Soon there came to him the call to the missionary labour to which he devoted his life. "In the dead of night," he says, "I saw a man coming to me, as if from Ireland, whose name was Victorinus, and who bore countless letters. And he gave me one of them, and I read the beginning of it which contained the words: 'The voice of the Irish.' And while I was repeating the words of this beginning, I thought I heard the voice of those who were near the wood Foclut, which is nigh to the western sea; and they cried thus: 'We pray thee, holy youth, to come and live among us henceforth.' And I was greatly pricked in heart and could read no more." The result of his consecrated labours was the establishment of a Church, which was monastic rather than episcopal, and which placed its emphasis upon right living rather than upon elaborate theology. An old chronicler of the seventh century says that "Ireland was full of saints." The Irish monastery was a Christian colony, "a holy experiment" for the practice of brotherhood, and the missionary zeal of St. Patrick continued to be a leading characteristic of Irish Christians. St. Columba carried the message to the little island of Iona, whence Christianity spread into England, transforming the rude inhabitants and producing such lives as those of Aidan and Oswald. St. Gall and St. Kilian also laboured unceasingly, and Haddan summarizes their work and that of other Irish missionaries by saying: "Between the latter years of the sixth and early ones of the eighth centuries,

the missionary work of the Scot [i.e. the Irish] stretched along the border of then existing Christendom, from the Orkneys to the Thames, and from the sources of the Rhine and of the Danube downwards to the shores of the Channel, from Seine to Scheldt, while at Bobbio, near the river Trebia in Italy, was planted a Catholic Irish Colony in the midst of Arian Lombards; and unknown but not less zealous missionaries bore the Gospel northwards, over stormy and icy seas even to the Faroe Islands and the shores of Iceland."

The passion for learning of these Celtic teachers was as absorbing as their missionary zeal, and it was in fact in the Celtic schools that classical learning was preserved during the dark ages. When barbarian invasion almost swamped the rest of Europe, the monasteries of Ireland remained untouched, and continued to teach the Greek language and to cherish their Greek MSS. of the New Testament.

During the reigns of Charlemagne and his successors, when, as a monkish chronicler tells us, "the study of letters was everywhere well-nigh forgotten, in such sort that the worship of the true God declined," these Irish scholars made such an invasion of Gaul that a writer of the period says: "Almost all Ireland is flocking to our shores, regardless of the barrier of the sea, with a troop of philosophers." Foremost amongst these was John the Scot, often called "Erigena." He was the author of that great saying, "There are as many unveilings of God as there are saintly souls," which carries us far away in spirit from the controversies which were disturbing Christendom and fixes our thoughts on the truth that every seeking soul may become a place where God reveals Himself. He was very much influenced by the mysterious writer known as Dionysius the Areopagite, who claims to be the convert of Paul in the Areopagus, the first Bishop of Athens, and the friend and companion of Apostles. This is almost certainly an assumed character, as the writings obviously belong to a much later period, but their influence was very widespread and lasting. His Christianity is impregnated with Greek philosophy and is far removed from the simplicity of the Gospel; nevertheless, for ten centuries his message helped to keep alive the truth that *God* is the one thing worth seeking with the whole heart and mind and soul. He insisted on *personal experience*, and both his writings and those of his disciple John the Scot fostered a living, first-

hand religion amid the materialism and ecclesiasticism of the middle ages.

The Waldenses or Vaudois stand foremost amongst the torch bearers of a spiritual life during these dark days. Tradition claims that they had an unbroken history from apostolic times, but whatever their first origin, they owe their name as a separate sect to Peter Waldo, a merchant of Lyons, who lived in the twelfth century. He was a successful and prosperous man, but was led to accept literally the words of Christ: "If thou wilt be perfect, sell all thou hast and give to the poor and come and follow Me." In obedience to this divine call he disposed of his business, placed his daughters in the Abbey of Fontevraud, settled a share of his worldly goods upon his wife, and began at once to use the rest for feeding the poor and spreading the Truth. He lived, as the birds do, without care or anxiety, going from house to house to visit the sick and comfort the sorrowful. Wherever he could he read the Gospels to little groups of people and showed them their simplicity. The idea which possessed Waldo was the necessity of following Christ *literally* and those who listened to his message did as he was doing, until there was quite a little company of these "poor of Christ" or "poor men of Lyons" as they called themselves, preaching the Gospel in the streets, in the fields, or in the market-places, and everywhere backing up their message by the purity and kindliness of their lives. The Archbishop ordered them to cease from usurping the office of preacher, which belonged only to the ordained. Waldo replied, "We must obey God rather than men." Thereupon the Archbishop expelled him and his followers from the city to the number of some thousands, but in doing so expanded the movement, for, like the early Christians under similar persecution, "they went everywhere preaching the word." From this time onward they were under the anathema of the Church and were mercilessly persecuted. This was the beginning of a struggle which has not ended yet, between a Church with an external authority to which everyone must yield obedience, and those who realize that man ought to think for himself, and needs no mediator but Christ between his soul and God.

During the twelfth century the power of the Roman Church reached its highest point. Every member of its priesthood was regarded as more powerful than any earthly king because of the

supernatural powers supposed to be conferred upon him at his ordination. He could open or shut the gates of heaven. He could work the miracle of transubstantiation and give or withhold the body and blood of Christ. The clergy were a class apart, with different courts of justice and different standards of conduct. They were supposed to live saintly lives, but it was well known that they were immoral, worldly and selfish. The priest offered to cure sin-sick souls, not by leading them to Him who alone can heal and save, but by the exercise of magical rites. The Church was looked upon as the sole channel through which the waters of life could flow out to a thirsty world, and it had power to fix at its will the conditions upon which this supply should be granted to individuals. What wonder that such supernatural powers entrusted to men who, after all, were only human, should be abused! The system of indulgences crept in and was practised to such an extent that St. Bernard, the most loyal churchman of the day, cries out in sadness: "Whom can you show me among the prelates who does not seek rather to empty the pockets of his flock than to subdue their vices?"

Such a Church could not satisfy the craving of mankind for reality, and it was inevitable that prophets should arise to proclaim the inalienable right of the soul to draw near to God, and that the Church should look on them with disfavour.

Another important movement, whose founder was born only thirty-five or forty years later than Waldo, was that inaugurated by Francis of Assisi. There are many points of similarity between the men themselves and the communities gathered through their teachings. Both Waldo and Francis set before themselves and their followers as their supreme aim the wholehearted following of Christ: both taught that religion must change the *life*, producing the fruit of the Spirit, or it is worth nothing. But whilst from the very beginning Waldo and his followers were disowned and persecuted by the Church, Francis succeeded in securing for his brotherhood the Papal blessing, was himself reverenced as a "Saint," and his "Order" ultimately became an important part of the Church organization. This later development, however, involved the shattering of his ideals and the falling away of the brotherhoods from the fervour of their first love, with its simplicity and purity of life.

We are all familiar with the story of the call that came to

Francis, and how he gave up his rich worldly inheritance that he might take the Lady Poverty for his bride. From that time he went about the world preaching the gospel of joy and love. The simple language which he used, full of anecdote and parable, his sympathy with the poor and suffering, his own knowledge of the heart's need and his absolute sincerity and conviction, all formed a deep contrast to the formal, barren services in the churches, and the joyousness of his self-denying life was a wonder which attracted many. Legends tell how, when he came to a village or city, multitudes flocked to hear him, so that vineyards and fields and public squares under the bright Italian sunshine were crowded with earnest listeners, who jostled one another in their eagerness to get near enough to touch him or to carry away some little relic from the man they loved and trusted.

Gradually a band of men gathered round him and the Order of "Poor Little Brothers," modelled on the gospel plan, shaped itself in Francis's mind. About 1210 this simple plan, or rule, was allowed by Pope Innocent III, and Francis returned from Rome full of joy. The establishment of the Order of the "Poor Clares" and that of the "Tertiaries" or "Brethren of Penitence" followed quickly on the first. That of the "Poor Clares" was for women who wished to live the same life of poverty and consecration as the Little Brothers, that of the "Tertiaries" was intended to include the many sincere and earnest-hearted men and women whose lives were changed by this new teaching, but who could not desert their home duties. Francis had no wish to destroy home life. He wanted rather to penetrate it with the spirit of love and devotion. The movement spread rapidly, and he had the joy of seeing his attempt to imitate Christ followed by multitudes who joined one or other of the new Orders. He had an instinctive fear of rigid organization; what he wanted was to bring back the apostolic *spirit* and leave that to work freely by its own inward, transforming power. His directions to his band of missionaries were of the simplest possible kind and full of the spirit of brotherhood. "Go, teach," he said; "God in His goodness has called us not alone for our own salvation, but for the salvation of the people. Do not judge nor despise the rich who live at ease and wear fine clothes, for God is their Saviour as well as ours. Go, preach peace to men, and repentance for the remission of sins. Some will receive you with joy and will gladly hear you; others, evil-

minded and full of pride, will denounce you and oppose you. Be patient in tribulation, fervent in prayer, courageous in labours, modest in speech, grave in demeanour, and grateful for the blessings which come to you. The Kingdom of Heaven will be your reward."

The Church, however, would not allow the growth of any movement which could not be fitted into its own ecclesiastical system. Francis's friend and protector, Cardinal Ugolini, afterwards Pope Gregory IX, tried to mould the new Orders into ecclesiastical form. He did it so gradually that Francis hardly knew what was taking place until he found that his simple brotherhood had been changed into an Order of Friars with fixed rules and under the direction of the Pope. He retired to pray and seemed to hear God say to him: "Poor little man! I govern the universe; thinkest thou that I cannot overrule the concerns of thy little Order?"

Unfortunately the influences of a degenerate Church soon brought about the corruption of the Order. The Friars were no longer poor, but were extravagant both in their public buildings and in their private expenditure, and are said to have been feared by wayfarers as much as armed robbers were feared. The Franciscan Order as we know it in history was not the work of St. Francis. But although the revival which he inaugurated failed to redeem the Church, there was a succession of faithful men who strove to preserve the ideals of their founder, and his teaching was a mighty spiritual force which influenced thousands of lives and whose inspiration still lives. As Dr. Rufus M. Jones says of St. Francis, he "bore in a very dark age a real likeness to his Divine Master. He entered deeply into the meaning of redeeming love, and was himself melted into radiant love by its warmth. Again and again kindred souls have gone back to this 'little poor man' of Assisi for their model: they have caught again from his story the passion of humanity: they have believed in his belief, have seen his vision, and have felt the same fountain of love open in their hearts—and so he has succeeded." [1]

The Waldensian and Franciscan movements were among the first of many similar efforts made by spiritually-minded men to counteract the continual tendency of the Church to become stereotyped and to exchange the substance for the shadow.

[1] *Studies in Mystical Religion, p.* 177.

During the thirteenth century, although the Church was more dogmatic and exclusive than ever, we find a very widespread and insistent demand for spiritual religion. Movements appear in widely distant places, witnessing to the fact that the *people* are awakening to their spiritual privileges, and are no longer content to submit to the dictates of priest or bishop, but demand freedom to think and act for themselves.

The limits of our space will not allow us to do more than mention a few of the societies and leaders of thought through whom these aspirations were voiced. There were poets, like Dante and Petrarch in Italy, or Chaucer and Langland in England ; there were the Beguines and Beghards, whose communities had all the advantages of the monastery without its drawbacks ; the Brethren of the Free Spirit, who held so exclusively to the truth of an immediate revelation within man's own soul that they often mistook their own impulses for divine guidance ; and Meister Eckhart, that great mystical teacher who, whilst in sympathy with their fundamental thought, had grasped the important distinction between true and false liberty, which the Brethren of the Free Spirit failed to understand. "The perfect spirit," he says, "cannot will anything except what God wills, and that is not slavery but true freedom. There are people who say, 'If I have God and His love, I may do what I like.' That is a false idea of liberty. When thou wishest a thing contrary to God and His law thou hast not the love of God in thee."

Eckhart's preaching and writings exerted a powerful influence in Germany and the neighbouring countries during these troublous years. Many events had contributed to produce an atmosphere of unrest and expectation. From 1309 to 1377 occurred the so-called "Babylonish Captivity" of the Church, when the Papal seat was transferred from Rome to Avignon and the Popes were more or less puppets of France. This was followed by a still greater catastrophe. On the death of Gregory XI in 1378 two rival Popes were elected, and for the next forty years the Church was torn and almost wrecked by the "Great Schism."

Besides these troubles in the Church, there was the "Great Civil War" in Germany, which had even more serious consequences for the common people. Louis of Bavaria was chosen Emperor in 1314 by one party of electors, and Frederick of Austria by another. The Pope took sides against Louis, ex-

communicated him, and laid an interdict upon all cities which supported him. This meant that no religious services might be held. Mass was not celebrated, infants were unbaptized, and no sacred offices could be performed for the dead. At the same time a terrible scourge which, to the superstitious spirit of the age, seemed directly traceable to the wrath of God, fell upon the cities of Germany. The "Black Death" broke out in Western Europe in 1347, raged for two years, and returned again in a slightly less violent form in 1358 and 1363. In some places only one-tenth of the population survived. There were also numerous earthquakes throughout the Rhine valley, one of which, "the great earthquake," left the city of Basle and many smaller towns in ruins. Little wonder that there was a widespread belief that the apocalyptic prophecies were being fulfilled, and that the end of the world was at hand.

It was under these conditions that there came into existence another important religious movement whose leaders and exponents are known under the name of "Friends of God," and who all seem to have been influenced by Eckhart's teaching. They had almost no organization, and were found in widely distant places, each group gathered under the guidance of some local spiritual leader. The principal names which have come down to us are: Rulman Merswin of Strasburg; his friend and secretary, Nikolaus von Löwen; John Tauler; Henry Suso; Jan Ruysbroek; Margaret and Christina Ebner; Henry of Nördlingen; the great unknown author of the *Theologica Germanica* and the mysterious personage, known as "The Friend of God from the Oberland."

Their religion was extremely simple. They humbly claim that they "have drunk at the heavenly fountain" and have had "their inner eye opened"; but although they seem to us to have placed too much emphasis on "visions" and "ecstasies," they were not mainly speculative, but were chiefly concerned with the affairs of actual daily life. Whilst it was distinctly a layman's movement and their writings aim to show how the Church can be helped and purified by the ministry of unordained persons, we never find in them any spirit of revolt from the existing order of things. They were scrupulously obedient to the rules of the Church and loyal to Roman Catholic ideals. Some of them, however, rose to the discovery that spiritual life is possible without the media-

tion of the Church, and that even Jews and pious pagans, who err through ignorance, may be saved without her rites.

The most famous account of one of these teachers is found in the *Book of the Master of Holy Scripture*, which has for centuries been accepted as a true history of the life of Dr. John Tauler. This is now questioned, but in any case it furnishes a good illustration of the leading idea of the "Friends of God" that a holy layman, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, has divine authority which places him above any merely man-ordained priest or minister.

The book relates that in 1346 there was a great doctor, a "master of Holy Scripture," who preached in a certain city, and multitudes flocked to hear him, and his preaching was talked about for miles round. A certain layman, the beloved "Friend of God from the Oberland," came by command of God ten days' journey, and heard five sermons by the "master." He perceived that the "master," though a good man, was still in the dark and without the "full light of grace." He therefore felt called upon to pass severe criticisms on his sermons and on the preacher himself, telling him that he was preaching what he had not yet experienced, and even going so far as to call him a Pharisee. The preacher was at first offended, but, after further talk, realized that he was in the presence of one who had attained to a spiritual experience far beyond his own, and with great humility besought the layman to instruct him. Thereupon he is recommended to go into his cell and to separate himself from all his old life and occupations. He is to say Mass every day, and spend the rest of the day in solitary meditation, comparing his life with that of the Saviour, until he shall attain complete humility. For two years he underwent this strict discipline, scorned by his friends and the laughing-stock of the people; but at last there came to him a wonderful experience: his whole being was filled with joy, and a light from above illumined his mind. Then the layman said to him, "Thou hast been touched by God with spiritual knowledge and now thou wilt have the Holy Spirit added to thy knowledge of Scripture, and one of thy sermons will do more good than a hundred of thy former discourses did."

This prophecy was amply fulfilled. From this time until his death nine years later "the master" increased in wisdom and power. He fearlessly attacked the corruptions of the Church

and the clergy, and though the offended monks tried to stop him, his influence was very great and he was consulted on all the affairs of the Church and of the city.

Although the "Friends of God" attached great importance to meditation and prayer, they taught that works of love are more acceptable than contemplation. Tauler says: "Spiritual enjoyments are the food of the soul, but they are to be taken only for nourishment and support *to help us in our active work*," and this insight brought him much nearer to our modern ideals of social service than most devout Catholics of his age to whom the individual inner life was of supreme importance. Nor does he account any one kind of service higher than another, so all be done in the right spirit. "One man," he says, "can spin, another can make shoes, and *all these are gifts of the Holy Ghost*. I tell you, if I was not a priest, I should esteem it a great gift that I was able to make shoes, and I would try to make them so well as to be a pattern to all."

Thomas à Kempis has written for us the Biography of Gerard Groote, whose life work was inspired by the "Friends of God." He was a great scholar, a "Master" of the University of Paris, and held a Professorship at Cologne, as well as many important ecclesiastical appointments. In fact he was a learned, prosperous, and well-esteemed churchman, but in the words of his biographer, "He was not yet seeking the glory of Christ, but in the broad ways of the world was following the shadow of a great name."

Then an unnamed "Friend of God" was sent to him with a message, calling him to a new life. After a time of indecision he obeyed, gave up all, and went forth as a simple layman to call the people to follow Christ. He preached in the popular dialect, and from his own experience, dwelling on the love of God, His tireless search for the souls of men and the possibilities of a life lived with God. The people flocked in crowds to hear him as they had not done since the days of Francis of Assisi. Whole towns, we are told, left their occupations, and even meals were neglected to hear his message. But the contrast he drew between the spiritual ideal and the actual Church was too outspoken to go unchallenged, and his permit for preaching was taken away. He felt it his duty quietly to submit, but his real work was still awaiting him. He had once visited John Ruysbroek, another "Friend of God," who, although quite unlearned, was so wonder-

fully taught by God that he became a great leader of men. The company of disciples gathered round him seemed to Groote to have realized the true ideals of Christianity, and he now determined to form a similar brotherhood. He had a passion for good books and a longing to make them more widely known. He had also a great love for young men, in many of whom the desire for a pure spiritual life had been awakened by his preaching. He invited these to join him in a community-life with a common purse, and gave them copying work to do to provide the means of living and to supply money for their education. Brother-houses sprang up rapidly in many places. The members took no permanent vows, mingled freely in the world for purposes of service, and lived by their manual labour without any resort to begging. Service was considered more important than meditation, the aim of the Brotherhoods being to make daily life spiritual.

When Thomas à Kempis was about twelve years old he was sent to Holland to be educated in the schools of these "Brethren of the Common Life," and in 1400, at the age of twenty, he entered the community at Mount St. Agnes, where he lived for seventy years. It was here, probably between the years 1400 and 1425, that he wrote his wonderful book, *On the Imitation of Christ*, of which Dr. R. M. Jones says: "This book has 'worked miracles' in every generation since it was written: it has been like fresh water to ship-wrecked men; it has helped thousands to turn defeat to victory and despair into optimism. No other book except the Bible has been a more permanent source of joy and comfort and hope. . . . The eternal thing in the book is its calm and compelling revelation of the reality of the spiritual kingdom, and its complete sufficiency for the soul. All is well the moment the soul changes its centre of gravity from the world of vain and fleeting things to the world of unchanging reality where God is all. . . . The passion of love, which shifts the values of life, is the key to peace and to the victory that overcometh the world." [1]

[1] *Studies in Mystical Religion*, pp. 325–326 and 327–328.

CHAPTER II

THE REFORMATION

"Lollards and Quakers had much in common. The very founders of Quakerism were 'of the stock of the martyrs'—martyrs directly or indirectly for their faith in Lollard views. But the real connection is still closer than that. George Fox and his followers, consciously or unconsciously, were the genuine *apostolic successors* of Wyclif's 'Evangelical men.' They proclaimed anew to their age truths which England had already heard; that 'God made not priests'; that *man* and not 'stonen houses with glasen windows' is the true divine temple; that the simplest person may go directly to *the Head* of the Church. The Lollard had already borne a valiant testimony to simple garb and plain speech; he had given his body to be burned in his protest against idolatrous sacraments; he had refused to "swear on a book," and he had called men away from 'Anti-Christ' to simple membership in the 'Sect of Christ.'"—Dr. Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, pp. 365–366.

We have already noted the spirit of revolt against Church authority which was abroad on the Continent of Europe during the thirteenth century, and we find the same conditions existing in England, where, perhaps even more than on the Continent, the people were demanding freedom to think and act for themselves.

At all events, England stood in the front ranks of the great Reformation movement. It was not until 1517 that Luther affixed his famous Theses to the church door at Wittenberg, but already, in 1380, Wyclif was attacking the doctrine of transubstantiation and was asserting the right of the people to read the Scriptures in their own tongue.

Early in the thirteenth century Robert Grossetête, Bishop of Lincoln and the foremost scholar of his age, was teaching that the Scriptures are the foundation of all true learning, and is said to have written to the Pope, "The cure of souls consists, not in the dispensation of sacraments, in the singing of hymns, and the reading of masses, but in the true teaching of the word of life, in rebuking and correcting vice, in deeds of charity and in the instruction of the people in the exercises of active life" He

encouraged the study of Aristotle and of the writings of Dionysius, and the intellectual and spiritual movement which took place at Oxford in the fourteenth century, and with which Wyclif was associated, was no doubt largely due to his influence.

Nor must we forget the part played in this spiritual awakening by William Langland, the author of *Piers Plowman*. He was probably educated at Oxford, but was pre-eminently a man of the people and voiced their revolt against the hollow shows of a merely formal religion. Throughout his great poem he pleads for a pure religion, and in his vigorous, alliterative verse denounces in satirical language the blind guides who teach the people to trust in pardons and indulgences. An "ill life," he declares, "is an ill life, whether in Pope or peasant. If you had a bag full of pardons . . . though you be in the fraternity among the four orders and have indulgences double-fold, I would not give a magpie's tail for your pardon *unless Do-well help you.*" In his three visions he describes three stages of religious life : "Do-well," "Do-Bet," and "Do-Best." "Do-well" religion is strictly moral, honest and God-fearing ; "Do-bet" is the religion of love, whose ideal is realized in Christ, and "Do-best" is the Christ spirit manifested through the members of a Church in living union with Christ and showing forth His love and praise in their daily lives. At the end of the poem the figure of Piers Plowman merges into that of the divine-human Christ, typifying human nature joined to the divine and doing God's will in the midst of a busy work-a-day world, and we have a final vision of a world where conscience is king and where all are under the rule of love.

John Wyclif seems to have gathered up into his own mind and heart all that these others felt of the needs of the time, and to have possessed the spiritual vision and the heroic spirit which fitted him to stand as the champion of the people in a fight for religious freedom.

He was born in the Richmond district of Yorkshire in 1320 and died at Lutterworth in 1384, so that his life was largely contemporaneous with the long reign of Edward III. In 1335 Wyclif entered the University of Oxford, and for the next forty-five years this was his home and the centre of his work. For many years he devoted himself mainly to theology and to University work, but for the last ten years of his life he was the chief leader in the spiritual battles of England.

Although King John in 1214 had in a moment of weakness consented to become a vassal of the Pope, and had promised to pay him tribute and to yield him obedience, the English people had always regarded this as a shameful transaction and had never considered it binding. The very next year they defied the Pope and his threatened excommunications, declaring that "the ordering of secular matters appertaineth not to the Pope." In 1365 Pope Urban V called upon Edward III to pay the promised tribute, but both Houses of Parliament unanimously refused the demand. In all spiritual matters, however, the Pope had a great deal of authority. The monks and friars were under his immediate control, and he could enforce his will through his appointments of Cardinals and Archdeacons and his power of excommunication and interdict.

In the early days of their history the friars had been "God's poor men," and the leaders of a great spiritual revival. Now they were one of the most corrupt sections of a corrupt Church. The monks were equally degenerate, and as they claimed the power to grant or refuse admission to heaven, they easily persuaded those who had lived careless or sinful lives to purchase forgiveness and future blessedness by leaving their fortunes to the Church.

Another abuse which outraged the Englishman's sense of fair play was the fact that none of these clerics could be tried by the ordinary courts of justice, and that in the "spiritual courts," where alone they could be tried, a layman had almost no chance of securing a judgment against them, however great the wrong committed. Then, too, the Cardinals and Archbishops appointed by the Pope were mostly foreigners, who cared for nothing but their position and their revenues. They often gave several benefices to one person, who then farmed them out to the best monetary advantage with the result that the parish priests who came into direct contact with the people, and who should have taught and shepherded them, were very poorly paid, and so uneducated and inefficient as to be of little use in raising the spiritual level of those under their charge.

The great leaders of mystical thought had long felt that the Church had lost her spiritual power. They had withdrawn from the evil in the world around them and had tried to show in their own lives the possibility of living the Christ life in communion with God, without all this man-imposed incubus of formulas and

ceremonies. But they did not attempt to break the yoke and set the people free. Wyclif, "the Morning Star of the Reformation," was the prophet-statesman whom his age needed, and right nobly he attempted his difficult task.

Early in his search for truth, Wyclif had become convinced that the teachings of the Scriptures ought to be accepted as more binding than Church authority, and as his life advanced he realized more and more whither his convictions were leading him. From his chair at Oxford he condemned the type of religion represented by useless monks and godless clergy. The Gospels, he maintains, do not speak of two types of religion—one for the "Orders" and another for "Common Christians"—they provide only for one "sect"—the "sect of Christ" and the distinguishing mark of that "sect" is the *practice* of the Christ life. In his tract called *How Anti-Christ and his Clerks travail to destroy Holy Writ*, etc., he emphasizes the directness of divine teaching to the individual soul. "God," he says, "is our best master and ready to teach true men all things profitable and needful for their souls." From others of his writings we find that he came very near to the doctrine of the inner light as a universal guide.

In 1377 he was summoned for heresy before the Convocation of Canterbury, but the support of John of Gaunt and Lord Percy saved him for a time. In the same year Pope Gregory XI issued five Bulls against him, reciting his errors under nineteen articles of accusation. But the people were with him, and he had also the influence of his royal friends, so his enemies were once again defeated.

In 1380, however, he attacked the doctrine of transubstantiation, and even his friends counselled silence, realizing that such teaching would change the whole of the religious beliefs of the nation. But Wyclif was no compromiser. He was willing to risk his life to follow his soul's vision, and Courtenay, Wyclif's great enemy and now Archbishop of Canterbury, determined to drive him from Oxford. It was not an easy task, for Wyclif was the greatest figure in the University, and Oxford was rightly jealous of her liberty of thought and freedom of speech. The united forces of the Church and State, however, proved too strong to be resisted, and in 1382 he was expelled from the University.

Even before this happened, he had realized that it was more important to teach the *people* than the scholars at Oxford. In

1374 he had been made rector of the little parish of Lutterworth, and he now gladly turned to its seclusion, where he busied himself with his work as pastor and began the great task of translating the whole Bible into the English tongue. Already during his busy Oxford life he had found time to translate the Psalms and parts of the Gospels, for he had realized that to place the Bible in the hands of the people would do more to free them from priestly rule than many volumes of sermons.

Many of his Oxford students were as keen as he was about this work, and they willingly made copies of his translations. Printing was still an unknown art, so that books were scarce and one copy had to serve for many readers. This probably suggested to Wyclif the idea of sending out itinerant preachers, who should carry with them these precious copies of Scripture and read and explain them in words which all could understand. At Lutterworth Wyclif always preached in English, and many of his congregation became interested and wanted to help in his work, and so we find that besides the Oxford scholars, poor and almost uneducated men joined the band of itinerant preachers who later on were known everywhere by the name of "Lollards." They travelled about the country dressed in long, brown woollen coats with deep pockets, and wearing sandals and broad-brimmed hats. They received no pay, but lived by hospitality freely offered to them. They read the Bible or some of Wyclif's sermons and spoke simple words, calling their hearers to follow Christ by leading true, loving and simple lives.

All this roused Wyclif's enemies to fresh activities, and the last years of his life were lived under the shadow of constant persecution. Nevertheless, in spite of all the efforts of those who wanted to burn him as a heretic, we are glad to know that he died in peace, during a service in his own church of Lutterworth, surrounded by the flock who loved him and whom he had served so faithfully.

Years later the Council of Constance decreed that Wyclif's bones should be burned at Lutterworth and his ashes cast into the sea. But no one could rob the people of England of the Bible which he had translated for them, nor undo the quiet influence of the hundreds of simple, earnest men whom he had been the first to send out to preach to them in their own language. The Lollards were, of course, persecuted like their founder, but in spite of opposition,

large congregations gathered round the preachers, and although during the second half of the fifteenth century the cause seemed to be losing ground, there was a revival in the reign of Henry VII when they grew in numbers more than ever. This zeal continued into the reign of Henry VIII; in fact Lollardry was never extinguished, but the influence of Wyclif spread far beyond England and was one of the inspiring causes of the great European Reformation.

During the reign of Richard II, his Queen, Anne of Bohemia, and her Court were impressed by Wyclif's preaching, and soon numbers of Bohemian students flocked to Oxford, where they drank in the truths he taught. John Huss and Jerome of Prague carried the message back to their native land, where they became fearless reformers. The same Council which decreed that Wyclif's bones should be burnt at Lutterworth also decreed that Huss should die at the stake in Constance. But the spiritual flame could not be extinguished by persecution, it only spread more rapidly than ever, and when Luther was ready to speak he found Europe ready to hear him.

At this time the breath of a new movement was everywhere in the air and a fresh life seemed to be bursting forth, as with the coming of spring, out of what was apparently dead and decayed. The discovery of the new world in 1492 and the invention of printing about 1450 had widened men's outlook and made the diffusion of knowledge much more possible than formerly. The Revival of Learning which began at Florence under the Medici was influencing the whole of Europe. The rule of the Medici was very autocratic, but they were great patrons of art and learning and under "Lorenzo the Magnificent" (1448–1492) Florence became the home of the great painter and sculptor, Michael Angelo, as well as of a little circle of friends who are often called the "Humanists," and who made it their life work to restore the forgotten literature of Greece and Rome and to encourage poetry, art and literature.

In the midst of this literary revival there also appeared at Florence a reformer of another sort. Girolamo Savonarola began to preach in 1486 and his vigorous denunciations of the vices of popes, cardinals, monks and princes, and his appeals to the people for repentance and reformation of life attracted crowds to hear him. Several Oxford students, amongst them John Colet, went to com-

plete their studies in Italy during these years, and caught the spirit both of the revival of learning and of the religious reform. Colet, on his return to Oxford, started a movement which combined the two, and which gave a great impetus to the Reformation both in England and on the Continent. He was deeply impressed with the need for reform in the Church, and believed that if the clergy would spend more time in studying the New Testament instead of the schoolmen, much good would result. About 1496 he began to lecture at Oxford on Paul's Epistles, trying to get at the real meaning of the words by going back to the original Greek. He gave the Epistles a fresh interest, as letters written by a living man to his friends, and not mere theological disquisitions, and it was not long before this new method of teaching became very popular. Students who had been burdened by scholastic arguments were glad to follow Colet's advice to "keep to the Bible and the Apostle's Creed, letting divines, if they like, dispute about the rest." Two of his disciples, Thomas (afterwards Sir Thomas) More, author of the *Utopia*, and Erasmus, became his ardent fellow workers in the great task of leading men away from the schoolmen back to the teaching of Christ. Erasmus became famous all over Europe for his book called the *Praise of Folly*, which was a scathing satire on the follies—especially the ecclesiastical follies—of the age, and later for his edition of the New Testament, published in 1516 at the new printing press at Basle. In this he set out in parellel columns the original Greek and a fresh Latin translation of his own, and aimed at giving to the world a living picture of Christ and His Apostles. Frederic Seebohm says of this book that it "did more to prepare the way for the religious reformation than any other book published during this era." [1] The fact was that the study of the Bible brought about its inevitable result of changing the emphasis in religious matters from outward forms to life and conduct, from the Church to man himself.

The story of the work of these three friends has been well told by Seebohm in his book *The Oxford Reformers*. They were the heralds in England of the new era, as were Zwingli in Switzerland and Luther in Germany.

Martin Luther (1483–1546) had been deeply influenced by the mystical thought of preceding generations. The *Theologica Germanica* and the writings of Tauler were his constant compan-

[1] *The Era of the Protestant Revolution*, p. 92.

ions, and when the flash of spiritual illumination came to him through the words "The just shall live by FAITH," the faith which he realized and proclaimed was not a body of doctrines, but an attitude of soul, which brings man into personal, living touch with God. "Faith," he says, "has the incomparable grace of uniting the soul to Christ as bride to husband, so that the soul possesses whatever Christ himself possesses." He saw clearly that salvation cannot come from without, but must be an inward, individual experience. This gave him a totally new conception of the Church as a fellowship of believers, each one ministering something to the spiritual life of the whole. "I believe," he says, "that there is on earth, wide as the world is, not more than one holy, universal Church, which is nothing else than the community or assembly of the saints. . . . I believe that in this community or Christendom all things are common and each one shares the goods of the others and none calls anything his own. Therefore, all the prayers and good works of the entire community help me and every believer, and support and strengthen us at every time in life and in death."

If Luther had lived up to these ideals of his early years the Reformation which he inspired would have more nearly fulfilled the aspirations of all those who were longing for spiritual and intellectual freedom. But instead of this we find that Luther, Calvin, and the other names familiar to us as sixteenth-century reformers, threw off the authority of the Church of Rome with its belief in salvation by works, only to substitute in its place other dogmas, as for instance, that the Bible is the ultimate and only basis of authority in religion, and that the external Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist are *necessary* to the inward experience of the realities.

The result was that although for Luther himself faith was always a living, powerful thing, which made him joyous and intrepid, in his *teaching* he constantly dropped to the lower level where it consists merely in the acceptance of a scheme of justification, and he was always strangely afraid of innovation or enthusiasm. Consequently, although he led men forward more surely perhaps than if he had tried to carry them further—the Reformation Church did not travel very far, and there was abundant need for those other spiritual leaders, who, though at the time their voices seemed silenced, and their mission unaccomplished, were

yet pioneers of truths which later ages have recognized and accepted.

When in 1516 Luther read the New Testament of Erasmus he discovered with disappointment that Erasmus did not accept the Augustinian doctrines of election and predestination on which his own faith was based, and as the great Reformation movement followed Luther's doctrinal lead, Erasmus could never fully identify himself with it, although he was in sympathy with Luther's revolt against Papal tyranny and hypocrisy. Nor could the "Oxford Reformers" approve of the stand taken by those whom we call "Spiritual Reformers," men who had shared Luther's early visions and who were ready to risk all for their fulfilment. Erasmus and his friends did much unconsciously to help forward their work, but their dread of schism made them wish to keep *within* the Church whilst endeavouring to reform it, and these others "were not satisfied," as Dr. R. M. Jones puts it, "with a programme which limited itself to a correction of abuses, an abolition of mediæval superstitions and a shift of external authority. They were determined to go the whole way to a religion of life and power, to a Christianity whose only authority should be its dynamic and spiritual authority." [1]

In his *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, Dr. R. M. Jones tells the story of some of these brave men who were steadfastly true to spiritual ideals, when the great Reformation movement itself had fallen away from its first vigorous life and fresh vision.

[1] *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, Introduction, p. xlvi.

CHAPTER III

SPIRITUAL REFORMERS OF THE REFORMATION

"They themselves were not founders of sects or churches. Their sole mission was the propagation of a message, of a body of truth and of spiritual ideals. They were from the nature of the case destined to be voices crying in a wilderness-world, and they were obliged to trust their precious cause to the contagion of their word and life and truth. The Quakers of the seventeenth century are obviously one of the great historical results of this slowly maturing spiritual movement, and they first gave the unorganized and inarticulate movement a concrete body and organism to express itself through." —Dr. R. M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, p. 337.

Most of these Reformers were known to their contemporaries as "Anabaptists," but we must remember that this was in those days a name of scorn which was applied to all exponents of a free and inward religion. It originated from the fact that one of the first things which the advanced or spiritual wing of the reformed party declared against was the practice of Infant Baptism. They maintained that Baptism could be of no avail unless it were received as an act of personal obedience to Christ in token of the desire to follow Him, and in pursuance of this belief they felt it right to be baptized again and thus earned their name of Anabaptists.

The distinguishing beliefs of the Anabaptists proper were that :

1. The Gospel is a new law to be literally followed.

2. The true Church is a visible Church with Adult Baptism as its outward sign, not to be administered as a means of grace, but as a sign of the covenant made between the soul and God. This Church is to be formed exactly on the model of the Apostolic Church, and to be kept pure by rigorous Church discipline.

3. The great commandment of the Gospel is love, and it gives no power to magistrates to persecute men for their faith.

The men of whom we are going to speak were not *all* Anabaptists, but they were all "Spiritual Reformers." They all believed in a Church which is the continued embodiment and revelation of Christ, whose power is proportioned to the spiritual life of the membership, which is an ever-growing body, continually re-discovering and re-adjusting truth and light to fit the facts which confront each age.

Whilst we study their beliefs, as they are variously illustrated in the lives and writings of the men themselves, we shall find that the fundamental truth which underlies and illumines all the rest is the same which also lies at the very heart of the Quaker message, viz.—that the Kingdom of God is within—that "the Way to God is Christ, inwardly and spiritually known."

Hans Denck, who was probably born in Bavaria about 1495, received a good University education and was appointed Director of St. Sebald's School in Nüremburg, then the foremost seat of learning in that city. Here he was at first closely associated with the Lutheran movement, but he soon came under the influence of Thomas Münzer (who had learned his theology from reading Tauler's sermons) and of Ludwig Hetzer, both of whom taught that God Himself speaks in the deeps of man's soul and that the Scriptures can only be understood by those who listen to this "living voice of God" within.

Having caught the idea from these enthusiastic leaders, Denck proceeded to work it out and soon became convinced that Luther's doctrine of sin and justification was destined to tie the new faith to outworn traditions and hinder it from the unfoldings of true life. When called upon to make a confession of his faith before the City Council of Nüremburg, when he was about twenty-eight years of age, he declared that "although he had not yet a full experience of the inward powerful Word of God, he distinctly felt its life as an inner witness which God had planted within him, and in the strength of this direct experience he denied the value of external ceremonies and declared that even the Bible itself cannot bring men to God without the assistance of this inner Light and Spirit."

As a result of this bold confession Denck lost his post as Director in Sebald's School and was banished from the City of Nüremburg in January, 1525, and from this time until his early death he was homeless and a wanderer, and died of the plague in Basle when only thirty-two years of age.

He wrote a number of little books, which impress the reader with the fact that he was a man with a message ; believing what he said and wanting others to try it and believe it. His writings were entirely free from the controversial temper, and are full of the spirit of tolerance and charity. "To hate everything that hinders love" is his ideal of life.

The fundamental fact of man's nature is for Denck personal *freedom*, and he, therefore, opposes with all his force the doctrine of election which he says "involves a limitation of the love of God." "God," he says, "forces no one, for *love* cannot compel, and God's service is, therefore, a thing of complete freedom." He believes too, that not only has man a freedom of choice, but an elemental hunger which pushes him Godward. God and man are not completely sundered. The Light shines, the invisible Word of God is uttered in the hearts of all men who come into the world, and this Light gives all men freedom and power to become children of God. He who turns to this divine spiritual reality and obeys it and loves its leading has already found God and has come to himself. "Oh, who will give me a voice," he writes, "that I may cry aloud to the whole world that God, the all-highest, is in the deepest abyss within us and is waiting for us to return to Him. Oh, my God, how does it happen in this poor old world, that Thou art so great and yet nobody finds Thee—that Thou callest so loudly and nobody hears Thee, that Thou art so near and nobody feels Thee, that Thou givest Thyself to everybody and nobody knows Thy name ! Men flee from Thee and say they cannot find Thee ; they turn their backs and say they cannot see Thee ; they stop their ears and say they cannot hear Thee !"

In another place Denck says : "No-one can know Christ as a means of salvation unless he follows Him in his life." The person who lives on in sin does not really know God. The soul itself must hear and see and feel ; must say "Yes" to the appeal of Love, and must be willing to work with that Love by yielding its will to the will of God and "learning to behave as a child of God." He appeals to Christians "to stop quarrelling over secondary matters such as doctrines and outward ceremonies, and to make all externals yield to love."

In an age when these ideas and beliefs were revolutionary and heretical, Denck succeeded in presenting the principle of the Inward Word as the basis of religion, without giving any encourage-

ment to moral laxity, for he found the way of freedom to be a life of growing likeness to Christ and he insisted that the privileges of blessedness belong only to those who *behave like sons.*

Johann Bünderlin, like his inspirer Denck, was a scholar of no mean rank. He understood Hebrew, had read the Greek and Latin Church Fathers, and was well-versed in the dialectic of the schools. The records of his life are very scanty.

He was born about 1495, and we know that he studied at the University of Vienna, but was unable to take his degree because he was too poor to pay the necessary fee. We hear of him as a Lutheran preacher and later at a great gathering of Anabaptists at Augsburg in 1526. Here he probably met Hans Denck, and such glimpses as we have of him after this show that he was imbued with his spirit and had become himself an apostle of spiritual religion. The last certain information we have of him is that he was banished from the City of Constance for "unsoundness" in 1530, but it is probably Bünderlin who is mentioned in a letter to Erasmus in 1533 as "a person newly arrived in Litium who teaches that there are no words of Christ as a warrant for the celebration of the Sacrament of the Supper, and that it is to be partaken of only in a spiritual way." The letter adds that "God had intervened to protect the people from such heresy" and that "the heretic had been imprisoned."

Bünderlin's religious views are explained in three little books, now very rare, in which he teaches that God, who is the eternal and only goodness, has always been going out of Himself into forms of self-expression. His first book deals with God's two-fold revelation of Himself, primarily as a living word in the soul of man, and secondarily through external signs and events, in an historical word, and in a temporal incarnation. Only through the sanctuary of his inner self can man be spiritually reached and won and saved. In the infant period of the race, God, like a wise teacher, used the symbol and picture-book method. The supreme instance of this divine pictorial method was the sending of Christ to reveal God visibly so that man should no longer think of Him falsely as hostile, stern and wrathful; but may see Him in Christ as He actually is—eternally loving, patiently forgiving and seeking only to draw the world into His love and peace.

In his final treatise he once more presents religion as a matter of the inward spirit, of obedience to a living Word, of love for an

infinite love, the bubbling of living streams of water in the heart of man. The period of signs and symbols, he says, is passing away —ceremonies and sacraments do not belong to a religion of the Spirit; they are for those who have not outgrown the picture-book. "When the Kingdom of God with its joy and love has come in us, we do not much care for those things which can only happen outside us."

Christian Entfelder lived an even more obscure life than his friend and contemporary, Bünderlin, and we know nothing of him except that he was in his early years allied with the Anabaptist movement, that in 1527 he was pastor of a small town in Moravia where he "taught his little flock the things which concerned their inner life," and that he wrote three books, in all of which there breathes the spirit of a deep and saintly life. His style is very simple, and he writes as a man of the people, unversed in human learning, but with a divine insight and wisdom. His first book closes with a beautiful account of the return of the prodigal to his Father and to his Father's love, and he breaks into a joyous cry, as if it all came out of his own experience: "Who then can separate us from the Love of God?" There is, he says, no salvation possible without the new birth of Christ in us, without self-surrender and the losing of oneself, without being buried with Christ in a death to self-will and without rising with Him in joy and peace and victory. He who rightly loves his Christ will speak no word, will eat no bit of bread, nor taste of water, nor put a stitch of clothes upon his body without thinking of the Beloved of his soul. In this state he can rid himself of all pictures and symbols, renounce everything which he possesses, take up his cross with Christ and join Him in an inward, dying life—then there comes a state in which poverty and riches, pain and joy, life and death are alike, when the soul has found its Sabbath peace in the origin and fount of all love.

Of Sebastian Franck, another of these "Spiritual Reformers," Dr. R. M. Jones writes: "He is especially interesting . . . because he unites in an unusual manner, the intellectual ideals of the Humanist with the experience and attitude of the Mystic. In him we have a Christian thinker . . . who could draw with breadth of mind and depth of insight from the wells of the great original thinkers of all ages, and who, besides, in his own deep and serious soul, could feel the inner flow of central realities. He was too much detached to be a successful reformer of the

historical Church, and he was too little interested in external organizations to be the leader of a new sect; but he was what he aspired to be—a sincere and unselfish contributor to the spread of the Kingdom of God and a significant apostle of the invisible Church." [1]

He was born in 1499 at Donauwörth in Schwabia. Whilst a student in Heidelberg he heard Martin Luther preach, but though he followed the great events of the Reformation which were passing around him all through his student years, he remained to the end of his University career a member of the Ancient Church, and was ordained a Gustenfelden priest about the year 1524. Soon after, however, he joined the Party of Reform and became a preacher at Gustenfelden near Nüremburg. In 1528, he married Ottilie Behaim, whose brothers were pupils of Albrecht Dürer, a woman of rare gifts, and in sympathy with the freer tendencies of the times. About this time also he became intimately acquainted with Denck, Bünderlin, Schwenkfeld and other leaders of the spiritual movement, and their influence upon him was deep and lasting. This is clearly evidenced all through his voluminous writings, in the best-known of which, *A Universal Chronicle of the World's History from the Earliest Times to the Present*, he boldly announces that "Everything does not hang upon the bare letter of Scripture; everything hangs rather on the spirit of Scripture and on a spiritual understanding of the inner meaning of what God has said. If we weigh every matter carefully we shall find its true meaning in the depth of our spiritual understanding, and by the mind of Christ. Otherwise the dead letter of Scripture would make us all heretics and fools, for everything can be bedecked and defended with texts, therefore . . . let everyone weigh and test Scripture to see how it fits his own heart. If it is against his conscience and the Word within his own soul, then be sure he has not reached the right meaning, according to the mind of the Spirit, for the Scriptures must give witness *to* the Spirit, never against it." [2]

The *Chronica* naturally aroused a storm of opposition against this bold advocate of the inner Way. His book was confiscated, he was for a time imprisoned, and for several years was obliged to wander from city to city, supporting his family now by soap-boiling, now by working in a printing house—only asking that

[1] *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, pp. 46–47.
[2] Ibid., p. 50.

he "might not be forced to bury the talent which God had given him, but might be allowed to use it for the good of the people of God."

The closing years of his life were spent at Basle, where he was able to work peacefully at his books and at typesetting, in spite of the paper guns which the theologians directed against him, and it was from Basle that he "went forth with God" on his last journey to find a safe and quiet "city with foundations," probably about 1542.

Besides *The Chronica* some of his more famous books are his *Paradoxa*, his translation of Erasmus's *Praise of Folly* with important additions of his own, *The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*, *Chronicle of Germany* and *The Seven Sealed Book*. This latter contains a noble "Apology" for his religious faith, in which he says, "I want my writings accepted only in so far as they fit the spirit of Scripture, and only so far as the anointing of the Word of God, Christ the inward Life and Light of men, gives witness to them. . . . I cannot belong to any separate sect, but I believe in a holy, Christlike Church, a fellowship of Saints, and I hold as my brother, my neighbour, my flesh and blood, all men who belong to Christ among all sects, faiths and peoples scattered throughout the whole world."

It was Franck's primary idea that man's soul possesses a native capacity to hear the inward Word of God. He calls this inward endowment by many names—it is "the Word of God," "the Power of God," "Spirit," "Mind of Christ," "Inward Light," "the Lamp of the Soul."

In the *Paradoxa*, Franck gives us his idea of "the true Church," which he says, "is not a separate mass of people, not a particular sect to be pointed out with the finger, not confined to one time or one place; it is rather a spiritual and invisible body of all the members of Christ, born of God, of one mind, spirit and faith, but not gathered in any one external city or place." This Church, which the Spirit is building through the ages and in all lands, is, once more, like the experience of the individual Christian, entirely an inward affair—"Love is the one mark and badge of fellowship in it." No outward forms of any sort seem to him necessary for membership in the true Church. "External gifts and offices make no Christian. . . . The Kingdom of God is neither prince nor peasant, food nor drink,

hat nor coat, here nor there, yesterday nor to-morrow, baptism nor circumcision, nor anything whatever that is external, but peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, unalloyed love out of a pure heart and good conscience, and an unfeigned faith."

Caspar Schwenckfeld was born of a noble family in Lower Silesia in 1489. He studied at Frankfort and Erfurt, and then threw himself into the life of a courtier with the prospect of a successful worldly career before him. It was Luther's heroic contest against the evils and corruptions of the Church which awakened him to the realities of religion, and although in later life he received much harsh treatment from the Wittenberg Reformer, Schwenckfeld never forgot that it was Luther who had first summoned him to a new life, and even in his long exile, for which Luther was largely responsible, spoke of him with a beautiful respect and appreciation.

He soon realized the weakness of the new type of Christianity which was spreading over Germany and the superficial character of the change in men's lives which was its result; and began to write letters and pamphlets pleading for a faith in Christ which shall "reach the deep regions of the spirit" and for a type of religion which will involve suffering with Christ and real conformity to His will, which means, he reminds us, that we cannot "take the Cross at its softest spot." Luther himself often wondered at the lack of true personal Christianity which resulted from the Reformation, and once said to Schwenckfeld in those early days, "Dear Caspar, genuine Christians are none too common, I wish I could see two together in one place." But he never seemed able to present the living kernel of Christ's Gospel in such a way as to help men to discover Him for themselves; and this was the task to which Schwenckfeld now felt himself called.

Like all the other "Spiritualists" Schwenckfeld regarded the Christian Church, not as any outward organization, but as "the entire community of the children of God . . . all who in heart and soul are believers in Christ, whose Head is Christ our Lord." Wherever such a Church is gathered, there also is Christ its Head who governs it, teaches it, guards it and defends it, works in it and pours His life into its members, to each according to the measure of his living faith. All spiritual service arises through the definite call and commission of God, and the persons so called and commissioned are prepared for their service, not by ordination, but by inward illumination through the Word of God. The preacher

possesses no magical efficacy—his only power lies in his spiritual experience, his clearness of vision and his organic connection with Christ, the Head of the Church and the source of its energy.

In harmony with this spiritual view of the Church, Schwenckfeld taught that the true Sacraments are also inward and spiritual, not legal and external like those of the Old Testament. "God," he says, "must Himself, apart from all external means, through Christ touch the soul, speak in it, work in it, if we are to experience salvation and eternal life." Christian baptism is, therefore, not with water, but with Christ; it is the immersion of the soul in the life-giving streams of Christ's spiritual presence.

In the same way his view of the Lord's Supper is that it is an inward and spiritual communion.

The external supper and baptism may, he admits, have a place in the Church of Christ as a pictorial symbol of the actual experience, or as a visible profession of faith, but this outward sign is for him of little importance and must not be allowed to occupy the foreground of attention nor to be made a subject of controversy.

The final break between Luther and Schwenckfeld took place in 1527 over the question of the meaning and value of the Lord's Supper. Schwenckfeld had instituted what he called a "Still-stand"—a suspension of the ceremony—"until the right understanding and true practice of it according to the will of the Lord should be revealed," and the bitter controversy which followed is one of the saddest tragedies of the Reformation. The immediate result of Schwenckfeld's teaching and practice was the loss of Luther's friendship and the arousal of such hostility on the part of the Lutherans of Silesia that it was impossible for him to continue his mission in that country, and he therefore went into a voluntary exile which lasted thirty years, and from which he never returned. "If" he once wrote, "I had wanted a good place on earth, if I had cared more for temporal than for eternal things, and if I would have deserted my Christ, then I might have stayed on in my fatherland and in my own house, and I might have had the powerful of the world for my friends." But "he thanks his Lord Christ for granting him, through all these years, an inward freedom, and for bringing him into His castle of Peace."

His outward life was anything but peaceful, and he was never safe from persecution, and had continually to flee from city to

city. Furious declarations and fierce denunciations were hurled against him by his enemies, who urged the civil authorities to proceed against him as a "dangerous heretic," although the bitterest of them had no word to say which reflected upon the purity of his motives or the consistency of his life.

He had always, however, a number of brave and devoted followers who, like himself, had not "taken the Cross at its softest spot" but were willing to risk home and life itself for what was to them the living Word of God. In spite of all that his persecutors could do, his friends have put on record that "he had a quiet and peaceful home passage" at Ulm in 1561.

The ideal purpose of Schwenckfeld's life was to promote the formation of little groups of spiritual Christians who should live in quietness, and spread by an inward power and an inspiration received from above. He saw clearly that no new reformation could be brought about by edict or by the proclamations of rulers, or the decisions of councils. He realized that it could only be accomplished by the development of the religious life and spiritual experience of the *people*, and to this work he dedicated his long years of exile. All such quiet, inward movements progress slowly; nevertheless, even during Schwenckfeld's lifetime, we have evidence of important results not only in Silesia, but in all the regions which he was able to reach, where he found many who "preferred salt and bread in the School of Christ" to ease and plenty elsewhere. The public records of Augsburg give us a wonderful glimpse of one such little company. Their leaders were working men, who, had they belonged to any recognized Church, would have attracted no notice from the city officials. Under Schwenckfeld's inspiration, however, they formed "a little meeting," in every respect like a seventeenth-century Quaker meeting, in their own homes, meeting about in turn, discarding all use of outward sacraments and waiting on God for teaching rather than on public preaching. They were discovered, their leaders banished, and their little meeting of "quiet spirituals," as they called themselves, ruthlessly stamped out. But similar groups were formed in scores of other places, and continued to cultivate inward piety in the Fatherland, until the fierceness of persecution drove them to emigrate to Pennsylvania, in 1734, and there their descendants may be found at the present day.

Schwenckfeld's influence, partly through his writings and

partly through his extensive correspondence, spread far beyond his own country, making its way into the inner life of many faithful souls. The best evidence of this in the seventeenth century was the rise in Holland of the "Collegiants" and in England of the corresponding societies of "Seekers."

Sebastian Castellio was born in the little French village of St. Martin du Fresne—not many miles west of Lake Geneva—in the year 1514. His parents were very poor, but somebody discovered that little "Bastian" was endowed with unusual gifts, and the family sacrifice, which has glorified so many homes of poverty, was made here in St. Martin; and the boy, with his eager thirst for knowledge, was started on his course in the Collège de la Trinité in Lyons. The following sketch of his life is (with some omissions for the sake of brevity) taken almost verbatim from Dr. R. M. Jones's book.

At Lyons, Castellio soon found himself bursting into a new world, the world of classic antiquity, which the Humanists were restoring to the youth of that period, and he experienced that emancipating thrill of joy which such a world of beauty can produce upon a lofty spirit that sees and appreciates it. Some time during this period he came also under a still greater and more emancipating influence, the divine and simple Christ of the Gospels, to whom he dedicated the central loyalty of his soul.

At twenty-five years of age, now a splendid classical scholar, radiant with faith and hope and a vision of a new age for humanity, which the recovered gospel was to bring in, Castellio went to Strasbourg to share the task of the Reformers and to put his life into the new movement. Calvin, then living at Strasbourg, received the brilliant recruit with joy and took him into his own home. When the great Reformer returned to Geneva in 1541 to take up the mighty task of his life, he summoned Castellio to help him, and made him principal of the College of Geneva, which Calvin planned to make one of the foremost seats of Greek learning and one of the most illuminating centres for the study of the Scriptures.

The young scholar's career seemed assured, and he aspired soon to fulfil the clearest call of his life—to become a minister of the new Gospel. In the course of his studies, however, he found himself compelled to differ from many of the traditional explanations of the Scriptures. Calvin instinctively felt that the bold and

independent spirit of this young scholar would prevent him from yielding his opinions to any, and he could not brook opposition. He prevented Castellio's ordination and made it impossible for him to continue his work in Geneva. To remain meant that he must surrender his right of independent judgment, and must adjust his conscience to fit the ideas that were counted orthodox in the circle of the reformed faith. That surrender he could no more make than Luther could surrender to the demands of his opponents at Worms. He quietly closed up his work in the College of Geneva, and went into voluntary exile to seek a sphere of life where he might think and speak as he saw the truth and keep his conscience clear.

He settled in Basle, where Erasmus had found a refuge, and where, two years before, his spiritual forerunner, the exiled and hunted Sebastian Franck, had died in peace. For ten years he lived with his large family in pitiable poverty. He read proofs, he fished with a boat-hook for drift-wood along the banks of the Rhine, and he did whatever honest work he could find that would help to keep body and soul together. Through all these years, every moment of the day that could be saved from bread-winning toil, and much of his night-time, went into the Herculean task which he had set himself—the complete translation of the Bible from its original languages into both Latin and French. In his French translation he put the Bible into current sixteenth-century speech. He made patriarchs, prophets and the New Testament characters live again in his vivid word-pictures, as the great contemporary painters were making them live on their canvasses. But the theologians were displeased because his translation was painfully weak in its support of dogma and doctrines. Still less did they like the preface to his Latin Bible, dedicated to the boy King of England, Edward VI, in which he boldly insists that the Reformation, wherever it spreads, shall champion the principle of a free conscience and shall wage its battles with spiritual weapons alone.

Two years after Castellio had penned this appeal, there came a decisive answer in the burning of Servetus at Geneva, and in the famous "Defence" of this bloody policy, written mainly by Calvin. A month later Castellio, under the name of Martinus Bellius, published a short Latin work "Concerning Heretics—whether they ought to be persecuted," which contained impressive

passages in favour of toleration from Church Fathers, Luther, Erasmus, Sebastian Franck and others. The preface is addressed to the Duke of Würtemberg, and in it he describes "an honest follower of Christ, who believes in God the Father, and in His Son Jesus Christ, and who wants to do His will, but cannot see that will just as others about him see it, in matters of intellectual formulation and of external practice." "I ask you," he continues, "whether Christ, who forgave those who went astray, and commanded His followers to forgive until seventy times seven, Christ, who is the final Judge of us all, if He were here, would command a person like that to be killed!" "Oh, Christ!" he cries out, "dost Thou see and approve these things? Hast Thou become a totally different person from what Thou wert? When Thou wert on earth nothing could be more gentle and kind, and more ready to suffer injuries. . . . Hast Thou changed to this? . . . Dost Thou command that those who do not understand Thy ordinances and commandments as those over us require, should be drowned, or drawn and quartered, and burned at the stake?" [1]

To-day religious toleration is a part of the air we breathe, but in the sixteenth century the idea was unforgivably new. Beza called it a "diabolical doctrine"—Castellio's protest "to burn a man is not to defend a doctrine, it is *to burn a man*,"—fell on unheeding or prejudiced ears, and he was marked as a dangerous man. Calvin calls him "a monster full of poison and madness" and asks how doctrine is to be guarded if heretics are not punished. "Doctrine!" replies Castellio, "Christ's doctrine means loving one's enemies, returning good for evil, having a pure heart and a hunger and thirst for righteousness. *You* may return to Moses if you will, but for us others Christ has come."

In his *Defensio*, written in 1562, he appeals to those who are trying to hunt him off the face of the earth: "From the bottom of my heart, I call you to the spirit of love. . . . Let me have the liberty of my faith as you have of yours. At the heart of religion I am one with you. It is in reality the same religion; only on certain points of interpretation I see differently from you. But however we differ in opinion, why cannot we love one another?"

He was, however, never allowed to have the peace and love for which he pleaded, and his writings aroused the bitterest controversy. His enemies accused him as a petty thief, who was

[1] Quoted in *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, p. 95.

supporting himself by stealing wood from his neighbours! In reply to this he tells with beautiful dignity the story of how he fished for public drift-wood on the shores of the Rhine and kept his family alive by honest toil, when he was living in pitiable poverty, "to which" he says to Calvin, "everybody knows that thy attacks had brought me. I cannot conceive how thou of all persons, thou who knowest me, can have believed a tale of theft about me and told it to others."

Just as the storm of persecution, which had threatened for years, was about to burst pitilessly upon him in 1563, he died quietly, and "passed to where beyond these voices there is peace." His students, in the University of Basle, where, in spite of the opposition from Geneva, he had been Professor of Greek for ten years, bore his coffin in honour on their shoulders to the grave, and his little band of disciples devoted themselves to spreading in Holland, and wherever they could, the precious seed of the truths he taught, which had in later years a rich harvest.

In the lives of these little-known, but earnest men, we have seen how, during the middle years of the sixteenth century, when the leaders of the Reformation were busy formulating new creeds for Christendom, and waging war with one another over the form in which the Eucharist ought to be celebrated, there were at least some who maintained that Christianity should be conceived and practised as *a way of living*—nothing more or less. This little group of men rejected all theological language and scholastic subtleties. They began afresh with the life and message of Jesus Christ, and seemed to expect that they had only to announce the wonderful truths they had discovered in order to bring the whole world into the light. Their influence extended to other countries besides Germany and Switzerland, and was especially felt in Holland, where it helped to bring about an important movement for spiritual religion.

In 1579 the Dutch Republic had been founded on a basis of religious liberty, and during the early years of the seventeenth century Holland was the one country in Europe where the exponents of unpopular faiths could find a refuge. It was from Holland that the little band of pilgrims carried their precious seed of truth to the new world in the good ship *Mayflower*, whose name is a household word wherever liberty of conscience is valued; but the story of the planting of the seed of religious freedom in

Dutch soil, and the slow and brave work of those who tended and nurtured it are not so well known.

Dirck Volckertsz Coornhert was one of the first of those who, having read the writings of the Spiritual Reformers of Germany, and receiving their message into his own heart, tried to interpret it to his countrymen in the Netherlands. He was born at Amsterdam in 1522 and became an expert in copper-plate engraving and etching in the city of Haarlem. Here he expected to spend a quiet life, but he soon felt called to wider interests. In his youth he had travelled extensively and seen with his own eyes the methods which the Spanish Inquisition used to compel men to uniformity of faith. His whole moral being revolted against their unspiritual methods, and he wrote and spoke fearlessly for the cause of religious liberty. Moreover, he strongly disapproved of the fundamental ideas of Calvinism as he heard them explained by the preachers of the Reformed Church of Holland. He was convinced of the freedom of man's will and that, however much he has been marred by a *fall* from his highest possibilities, there is still deep within him something divine which makes union with God possible.

A keen desire to go back to the original sources of religious truths and to read the New Testament and the Fathers in their own tongue led him to learn Greek and Latin after he was thirty years of age, and he soon acquired a reputation for skill and learning. He translated a number of books which were in harmony with his ideas of truth, such as Boethius's *Consolations of Philosophy* and Erasmus's *Paraphrases of the New Testament*, and himself wrote fearlessly and convincingly on liberty of thought and kindred topics. His writings were considered so dangerous that Jacobus Arminius was appointed by the Consistory to make once for all a refutation of them, but as he studied the works he was to refute, he became so impressed with their truth that he accepted many of Coornhert's views and became himself a greater "heretic" and a more dangerous opponent of Calvinism than the man whom he was chosen to annihilate.

Coornhert criticises all the great reformers for having insisted far too much on externals, and because they taught that the true Church is a visible Church, whereas he believed it is a spiritual community, and that a man may be a true Christian without belonging to any outward and visible Church. He looked upon

all outward forms and ceremonies as temporary, and considered them only as shadows and symbols of the invisible and eternal realities. For him, as for our early Friends, *the true and availing baptism* is a baptism into the life, death and resurrection of Christ; *the real communion* is that in which the soul feeds upon its true divine food and drink—the Life of Christ given for us; *the real Sabbath* is not a sacred day set apart and kept in a strict and legal manner, but rather an inward quiet, a prevailing peace of soul. The Church has been pitiably divided by disputes over the right form of administering these outward ceremonies, but as soon as it is understood that they are only signs and symbols, then the main emphasis can be put where it rightly belongs, and where Christ Himself always put it—on *Love* and the practice of love.

He was intensely alive to the difficulties of sincere and simple souls, perplexed by the multitude of sects and parties in the Church; and for their sakes refused to found a new sect, whilst pleading for freedom of conscience and for liberty to live in peace as members of the invisible Church, either using or omitting outward forms as conscience might direct, but he believed that there was a time coming, for which all sincere souls should wait and pray, when a new fellowship of divinely commissioned apostles would reform the Apostate Church, uniting all divided sects and gathering the whole world into the true Church of Christ.

In the meantime, whilst waiting for this true Apostolic Church, Coornhert proposed to found an *Interim Church*, with no authoritative preachers or teachers; and it was this idea which was embodied in the Collegiant movement of the early seventeenth century.

One of the stormiest religious controversies of the time arose over the views taught by Jacob Arminius—those who supported him were condemned by the Synod of Dort, 1619, and in consequence of this two hundred ministers were deposed for life and one hundred banished.

Many were thus left without any ministry of which they could approve, and amongst these were the four brothers Van der Kodde, John, William, Adrian and Giesbert, sons of a prosperous farmer at Warmund. All the brothers were well educated (William being a famous Oriental scholar and Professor of Hebrew in the University of Leyden) and they had all studied the writings of Castellio, Coornhert, and Arminius. Strongly impressed with the ideas of the Spiritual Reformers, they decided to hold a

meeting together of the free congregational type without any minister or prearranged service. The meeting which was called a "Collegium" (i.e. a gathering) was soon moved to the neighbouring town of Rynsburg and received many additions to its membership from the Mennonites whose ideas became engrafted on the new society. We find that they objected to oaths, refused to fight, even in self-defence, and tried to carry out literally the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. They insisted on simplicity of life, including plainness of dress and the avoidance of the use of titles and of the world's etiquette. They believed in the equality of men and women even in public ministry. Baptism and the Supper were allowed, but not considered essentials. The one essential mark of fellowship was brotherly love, not only within the limits of the society, but towards all men.

As the movement spread, "Collegia" were formed in Leyden, Rotterdam, Amsterdam and other places, with characteristic variations, but essentially on the same model. Once a year they held a large yearly meeting at Rynsburg, which was attended by members from all parts of Holland.

One of the leaders of this Collegiant movement, Galenus Abrahams, is mentioned by the Quaker historian, Sewel, and also in the Journal of George Fox. He was a member of the Amsterdam group who laid great stress on the importance of the Church being governed by those who had received gifts from the Holy Spirit, and in 1677, Sewel tells us that William Penn and George Keith held a discussion with Abrahams in which he maintained that "nobody could be accepted as a messenger of God, unless he confirmed his doctrine by miracles." In this discussion Abrahams "was much confounded and truth gained ground." About the same time Fox had a personal interview with him and found him "very high and shy, so that," he says, "he would not let me touch him nor look upon him, but he bid me keep my eyes off him, for he said they pierced him." [1]

Seven years later, however, in 1684, Fox saw him again, and this time "he was very loving and tender, and confessed in some measure to Truth," so that Fox says, "we parted very lovingly." A few weeks later Fox held a largely attended meeting, and at the close Abrahams, who had been "very attentive to the testimony of the Truth," came and took Fox "by the hand very lovingly." [1] The two movements were so near together in spirit

[1] *Journal*, 1st edn., pp. 452 and 521–522.

that for many years afterwards the common people, who were not given to nice distinctions, called the Annual Gathering of the Collegiants at Rynsburg "the Meeting of the Quakers."

A remarkable little book, written probably by Peter Balling, one of the Collegiants, was so full of those truths taught by the Friends that it was translated into English and published as a Quaker tract in 1663 under the title of *The Light upon the Candlestick*.[1] It bears strong evidence of the influence of Descartes and Spinoza, the latter of whom spent three years in the village of Rynsburg in intimate association with his Collegiant friends.

The author speaks of the light as "the first principle of religion," and says, "Without thyself, O Man, thou hast no means to look for by which thou mayest know God. Thou must abide within thyself; to the Light that is in thee thou must turn; there thou wilt find it and nowhere else." This divine light, which he calls "the Living Word," "the Light of Truth," or sometimes "Christ," reproves man of sin, and shows him that he has strayed from God, and if followed and obeyed it brings him into union with God. Dr. R. M. Jones calls this book "the maturest expression of this slowly developing spiritual movement which began with Hans Denck and flowed uninterruptedly through many lives and along many channels and burst out full flood in England in 'the Children of the Light,' who were known to the world as Quakers."[2]

Valentine Weigel is another mystical writer, whose influence Dr. Rufus M. Jones considers "important for the development of spiritual religion" and "as a living link between Reformers like Denck, Schwenckfeld and Franck of the sixteenth century, and Jacob Boehme and the spiritual interpreters of the English Commonwealth."[3]

He was born at Naundorf in 1533, was educated at the Universities of Leipzig and Wittenberg, and after being ordained was called in 1567 to be pastor of Zschopau, where he passed the rest of his life and died peacefully in 1588. He was a true shepherd of his flock; loving them and being loved by them, and his preaching was so full of life that it seems to have

[1] It was also published at the end of Sewel's *History*.
[2] *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, p. 132.
[3] Ibid., p. 139.

made his hearers *feel* the presence and power of the spirit of God.

His writings were not published until twenty years after his death, and were not translated into English for another forty. The one which had the most influence in England was entitled, *Of the Life of Christ, that is, Of True Faith which is the Rule, Square, Levell or Measuring Line of the Holy City of God and of the Inhabitants thereof here on Earth.*

No book before this appeared had approached more closely to the position of the early Friends. By "a new-nativity," he tells us, any man in the world who wills it in living faith may receive the Christ-life and thereby be raised to membership in the Kingdom of the Christ-humanity. When Christ is thus formed within, a new way of living comes into operation. Love is the supreme "sign" of this new order. "The man who has the Christ-life in him does not quarrel; he does not go to law for temporal goods; he does not kill; he lets his cloak and coat go rather than oppose another." "Where the Life of Christ is, there is no warre made with corporall weapons." "The world wars, but Christ doth not so. His warfare is spiritual." "As fast as Christ is formed within as the Life of one's life, the believer attains a peace and a power which make the rent between flesh and spirit ever less disturbing, though it still remains until the fleshly tabernacle dissolves." "God," he says in another place, "is the Eternal Peace which is longed for by us men, but found by few because they do not *mind Christ*, who is the Way. God has not grounded either thy Peace or thy Salvation on thy running hither or yon, nor on thy works and thy creaturely activities, but on an inner calm and quiet, on a Sabbath of the soul in which thou canst hear, with the simple and the tender-minded, what the Lord is saying and doing."

The writings of Weigel were amongst the influences which helped to form the views of Jacob Boehme, and both Weigel and Boehme had an important part in creating the thought-atmosphere of the England in which our Quaker forefathers lived.

Jacob Boehme was born in the little market town of Alt Seidenberg in November, 1575. His father and mother, Jacob and Ursula Boehme, were of good German peasant stock. They were Lutherans—people of simple piety—and Jacob was brought

up in the Lutheran faith as it was formulated at the end of the sixteenth century. His education was very limited, but he had great natural capacity and mental powers. He was a keen observer, and whether watching the cattle in the fields or reading the Bible (which he knew as very few persons have known it), he saw everything with a vivid imagination. Whilst still very young he began to revolt from the orthodox theology of his time, and his years of reading and meditation were the preparation for that revelation which later on came to him as it seemed suddenly.

His friend and biographer, Abraham von Franckenberg, gives us the following word-picture of his appearance: "The external form of Jacob's body was worn and very plain, his stature was small, his forehead low, his temples broad and prominent, his nose somewhat crooked, his eyes gray and rather of an azure cast, lighting up like the windows of Solomon's Temple; his beard was short and thin; his voice was feeble, yet his conversation was mild and pleasant. He was gentle in manner, . . . humble in conduct, patient in suffering and meek of heart. His spirit was highly illuminated of God beyond anything nature could produce."

He lived from his very youth in the fear of God. When a boy he was set to tend cattle in the fields, and in his fourteenth year was apprenticed to a shoemaker for three years. He took a peculiar pleasure in hearing sermons, but disliked the endless wranglings about religion, which were all too common amongst the professing Churches then, and withdrew into himself, spending much time in prayer. His endeavours to live a pure life, refusing to listen to frivolous talk, reproving his comrades and even his master when they indulged in unseemly conversation, caused his master to dismiss him with the remark that he did not care to keep a "house-prophet" any longer. Hereupon he went forth as a travelling cobbler, spending some years in his wanderings and discovering more and more how true religion was being lost in the babel of theological discussions, and seeing, with those penetrating eyes of his, deeper into the meaning of life and the world.

There is much in this short account of Boehme that reminds us of our own Quaker prophet, George Fox. His godly parentage and simple guarded home life, his youthful seriousness and even his occupations, for George Fox had to do with sheep as Boehme with cattle, and both were apprenticed to shoemakers. The azure-gray eyes which "lighted up like the windows of Solomon's

Temple" remind us of Fox's "piercing gray eyes" which like Boehme's, seemed to see beneath the surface of things to the inner spiritual realities. Both men, too, passed through a very similar experience in their early manhood when, after long seeking for the truth, they seemed to be given an insight into the very secrets of nature and to understand God's voice in their own hearts. Boehme tells us that suddenly he felt himself environed and penetrated by the Light of God and admitted into the innermost ground and centre of the Universe. He further tells us that he had been going through a long and earnest travail of soul as a seeker, "striving to find the heart of Jesus Christ, and to be freed and delivered from everything that turned him away from Christ." "Suddenly," he tells us, "the gate was opened. In one quarter of an hour I saw and knew more than if I had been many years together in a University. . . . In this Light my spirit suddenly saw through all, and in all created things, even in herbs and grass, I knew God, who He is, how He is, what His will is."

Readers of Fox's *Journal* will remember many similar passages there in which he speaks of what he calls the "openings" which the Lord gave him. One quotation must suffice here. "Now was I come up in spirit through the flaming sword into the Paradise of God. All things were new and all the creation gave another smell unto me than before, beyond what words can utter. I knew nothing, but pureness and innocency and righteousness, being renewed up into the image of God by Christ Jesus. . . . The creation was opened to me : and it was showed me, how all things had their names given them, according to their nature and virtue. . . . Great things did the Lord lead me into, and wonderful depths were opened unto me, beyond what can by words be declared ; but as people come into subjection to the Spirit of God, and grow up in the image and power of the Almighty, they may receive the Word of Wisdom that opens all things, and come to know the hidden unity in the Eternal Being." [1]

To both Boehme and Fox, the experience they thus passed through proved the decisive turning-point of their lives, and thereafter each lived solely to voice the message he had received, which, as he endeavoured to express it, was continually renewed and developed by the same Spirit from whom the first enlightenment

[1] *Journal*, 1st edn., pp. 17 and 18.

came. Boehme's message was mainly delivered through his voluminous writings; Fox's through his preaching.

About the same time that he had the experience of "the gate being opened" to him, i.e. about 1600, Boehme had married Catherine Kunchman, given up his wanderings, and opened a shoemaker's shop in Görlitz, where he soon established a reputation for faithful, honest work, and where he was able to buy himself a little house to bring up the four sons and two daughters who as the years passed on were added to the happy home.

For ten quiet years Boehme meditated on what he had seen, and probably also read much. His insight grew steadily clearer as he read and pondered, and at last "it was," he says, "powerfully borne in upon my mind to write down these things for a memorial, however difficult they might be of apprehension to my outer self [intellect] and of expression through my pen. And so," he continues, "whatsoever I could grasp sufficiently to bring it out, that I wrote down."

This first book Boehme called *Morning Glow* or *Aurora*. His MS. copy was freely lent to readers and often re-copied by them. Before long one of these copies fell into the hands of Gregorius Richter, pastor of Görlitz; a man of fierce orthodoxy, and very jealous of his official dignity. He at once proceeded to preach a sermon on "False Prophets," in which he vigorously attacked Boehme, who meekly sat in the church and listened to the fulminations against him. After the sermon Boehme quietly asked the preacher to show him what was wrong with his teaching, but the only answer he received was that if he did not instantly leave the town, the pastor would have him arrested; and the next day he was summoned before the magistrates and ordered to leave the town immediately, without any time even to see his family or settle his affairs. Boehme meekly replied: "Yes, dear Sirs, it shall be done—since it cannot be otherwise, I am content." On further consideration, however, they recalled him, and offered him the privilege of remaining if he would cease writing. "To this," he says, "I assented since I did not then see clearly the Divine way, nor did I understand what God would later do with me." . . . "I gave up for many years [about five] all writing and speaking about my knowledge of Divine things, hoping vainly that the evil reports would at last come to an end, instead of which they only grew worse and more malignant."

At last Boehme became restless under this enforced silence, feeling that he had been "entrusted with a talent which he ought to put out to usury, and not return to God without improvement, like the lazy servant." So in 1618 he broke the seal of silence and for the next six years wrote almost incessantly, even laying aside his trade that he might, as he puts it, "the better serve God and his brothers." Then Richter saw some of his books and stirred up the Town Council against him, and he was forced to leave Görlitz. He was as sweet and gentle in spirit as he had been ten years before. "I pray," he says, "for those who have reviled and condemned me. They curse me and I bless." Nor did he go forth downcast nor discouraged. He saw that his message was being "sounded through Europe," and predicts that "the nations will take up what his own town is casting away." Already he hears that his book has been read with interest in the Court of the Elector of Saxony, and he writes, March 15, 1624: "I am invited there to a conference with high people and I have consented to go at the end of the Leipzig fair. Soon the revelation of Jesus Christ shall break forth and destroy the works of the Devil."

This visit to the Elector's Court in Dresden came off well for the simple shoemaker. He spent two months in the home of the Court physician, Dr. Hinkelmann, where many of the nobility and clergy came to see him and to talk to him. Three professors of theology and other learned men were asked by the Elector to examine him and reported that they did not yet quite succeed in understanding him, but hoped His Highness would have patience and allow the man sufficient time to expound his ideas, for "who knows" they said, "what lies at the bottom of it all."

The end of his life, however, was near. He was taken ill in November, 1624, and hurried home to Görlitz, where his family still were, and there he died in the quiet of his own home. The night before his death he spoke of hearing beautiful music and asked to have the door open that he might hear it better. In the morning, as the dawn broke, he bade farewell to his wife and children, committed his soul to the crucified Lord Jesus Christ and said: "Now I go to Paradise."

An insistence on first-hand, personal experience and practice of the Christ life as the ground of true religion is the fundamental feature of Boehme's Christianity. His books show us that he

travelled through immense heights and depths. Like Dante, he saw the eternal realities of the unseen world and told, as well as he could, what he saw—but a practical and very simple message runs like a thread through all his writings: "The Kingdom of God is not from without, but it is a new man, who lives in love, in patience, in hope, in faith and in the Cross of Jesus Christ."

His writings travelled over into England and had a profound influence there. In 1646 Charles Hotham, Rector of Wigan, published a discourse in Latin, which was translated into English in 1650 by his brother, Justice Durant Hotham under the title of *Introduction to Teutonic Philosophy*, which clearly shows Boehme's influence on these two brothers. This book is of special interest to us because the translator was almost certainly the Justice Hotham of whom George Fox wrote: "He was a pretty, tender man that had had some experience of God's working in his heart, and after that I had some discourse with him of the things of God, he took me into his closet and said he had known that principle [of the Light] these ten years and he was glad that the Lord did now publish it abroad to the people." [1]

John Sparrow and John Ellistone translated into English the whole of Boehme's works before 1661, and they and others did much to disseminate his teaching. There is evidence that these books were studied by the serious "Seekers" of the Commonwealth period, and we know that they were read by some of the early Friends. Fox himself never mentions Boehme; but many of the ideas and experiences recorded in his journals are very similar to those in Boehme's writings.

At all events the similarity of the fundamental position of the early Friends with that of Boehme and the Spiritual Reformers whom we have been studying is perfectly clear. Quakerism is thus no isolated religious phenomenon. It is deeply rooted and embedded in a far wider movement that had been accumulating volume and power for more than a century before George Fox became a "prophet" of it to the English people. This movement, both in England and on the Continent, was a serious attempt to bring about a more complete Reformation, to restore primitive Christianity, and to change the basis of authority from external things to the inner life and spirit of man.

[1] *Journal of George Fox* (Cambridge Edn. 1911) vol. i., p.18.

CHAPTER IV

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN ENGLAND IN THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

"No greater moral change ever passed over a nation than passed over England during the years which parted the middle of the reign of Elizabeth from the meeting of the Long Parliament. England became the people of a book, and that book was the Bible. . . . Elizabeth might silence or tune the pulpits; but it was impossible for her to silence or tune the great preachers of justice and mercy and truth who spoke from the book which she had again opened for her people. . . . The whole temper of the nation felt the change. A new conception of life and of man superseded the old. A new moral and religious impulse spread through every class. . . . The whole nation became in fact a Church. The great problems of life and death, whose questionings found no answer in the higher minds of Shakespeare's day, pressed for an answer, not only from noble and scholar, but from farmer and shopkeeper in the age that followed him."—J. R. GREEN, *Short History of the English People*, chapter viii., as quoted by W. C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 1.

DURING the sixteenth century many of the Spiritual Reformers had fled from persecution on the Continent to England, where, as early as 1534, we find them accused of "lurking secretly in divers corners and places minding craftily and subtilly to provoke and stir the King's loveing subjects to their errors and opinions" and of increasing "naughty printed books" with the same object. They went under the general name of Anabaptists, but their "errors and opinions" were so very similar to those held by the Lollards that it is not easy to distinguish between them. We know that they did not find the freedom they sought, but they were cruelly persecuted and some even burnt for their faith.

We must remember that the Reformation in England had begun and developed in quite a different way from that on the Continent. To us it seems to have owed its first impulse to Wyclif, but Wyclif died, despised and persecuted as a heretic by the Church of his day, and when more than a century later Luther defied the Papal authority at the Diet of Worms, England was still

a Catholic country and reverenced the Pope of Rome as head of her Church. The English King, Henry VIII, undertook to defend the orthodox faith against Luther's heresies, and the book he wrote earned for him the title of *Fidei Defensor*, still borne by our sovereign. Ten years later Henry quarrelled with the Pope over the divorce of his wife, and declared himself "Head of the English Church." This step was, however, a mere passing of control from the Pope to the King and did not necessarily affect the constitution of the Church, although it opened the way for many changes and made possible the gradual reformation which took place in England, as the conscience of the people was awakened to the evils of the old system.

In conformity with his new title, Henry at once passed Acts restraining all appeals to Rome and abolishing the power of the Pope in England. A little later he ordered a copy of the Bible to be placed in every church, chained to the reading desk, and, because he was short of money and wanted the spoils to pay for his own extravagances, he dissolved all the monasteries on the flimsy pretext that the monks led wicked lives.

All these things, though done from unworthy motives, tended to widen the separation between the English and the Roman Church, and in the reign of Edward VI, whose sympathies were all with the Reformers, the further steps were taken of ordering the use of English in Church services, pulling down images, and publishing a Prayer Book in the English tongue. Mary's reign was a set-back to the cause of religious reform, but by the time that Elizabeth succeeded her in 1558 the people had come definitely to associate Roman Catholicism with Papal rule, oppression and persecution, and joyfully welcomed a sovereign who would uphold an English Church of the "reformed" or "Protestant" type.

These changes, whilst they established Protestantism in England, had not really done much to advance the cause of true, vital religion. There was still a fixed form of doctrine and fixed services to which all must conform, with very little freedom for the individual conscience and no recognition of the fact that laymen could have any share in Church government or be divinely ordained preachers. The teaching of Wyclif had been much more spiritual than that of Luther, Zwingli or the other great Reformers on the Continent, and his followers made a consistent stand against any

form of Church government which emphasized externals and denied liberty of thought and of access to God to the individual.

Soon after the accession of Elizabeth, a new name, that of "Puritan" began to be applied to all who felt that the reformation of the Church was incomplete and who pleaded for its further "purification" from unscriptural and corrupt forms and ceremonies. Under this general name were included three important and quite distinct parties—Presbyterian, Independent and Baptist. They all wanted to free the Church from State control, but whilst the Presbyterians wished to establish a rigid organization, governed by Presbyters with full spiritual powers, the Independents and Baptists made the *people* of the Church supreme and allowed great freedom to individual members. The Baptists approached more nearly than the other two to our own Quaker standpoint.

The first General Baptist Church on English soil was established in Newgate Street in 1612, and its members made a splendid stand for liberty of conscience. One of their number, Leonard Busher, wrote the earliest English tract on the subject, which was printed and presented to King James and the English Parliament in 1614. Busher was a poor, working man who had had his own share of persecution. He argues in simple language that "no king or bishop is able to command faith. That is the gift of God. . . . You may force men to church against their consciences, but they will believe as they did before when they come there."

The "General" Baptists believed with Arminius in the freedom of the will and the possibility of salvation for all men. The "Particular" Baptists adopted the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination. There were other minor subdivisions, but *all* the Baptists held that there should be liberty of conscience for all, and that the laity should share many of the privileges and responsibilities commonly supposed to belong only to the clergy.

When James I came to the throne the hopes of all parties of Puritans rose high. He had been brought up as a Presbyterian and had been heard to say that their Church was the purest in the world, and the service of the English Church "but an evil-said Mass in English." Contrary to all expectation, however, he refused to have anything to do with Presbyterianism, because it would leave him no control in Church affairs, and the Reformers

were told that they must either conform or leave the country. Consequently the whole weight of Puritan influence was against the King and in the long struggle between the first Stuart Kings and Parliament, the Parliamentary leaders were almost all men of Puritan sympathies. In order to secure the help of the Scots, Parliament was forced to sign the "Solemn League and Covenant" which imposed upon England the full Presbyterian system with its intolerance and its rigid Church discipline. Cromwell hated this system, but yielded for the sake of victory. He refused, however, in choosing his officers to reject a man because he was an Independent or a Baptist, and after the victory of Naseby in 1645, he urged Parliament to grant liberty of conscience to the "honest men" who had been fighting. The free congregational system of the Independents made a strong appeal to the best elements in the Puritan party. The sympathies of the army became strongly Independent, and when a little later Parliament came into power, we find that the Independent influence had practically secured liberty of conscience for all, except Papists and Episcopalians, who were feared for political reasons.

We also find that during these unsettled years, England had become full of persons who were adrift from their spiritual anchorage, earnestly seeking truth, and in their earnestness multiplying strange doctrines and setting up different sects to emphasize the various aspects of truth which appealed to each one. Besides the Presbyterians, Independents and various Baptist societies, we hear of the Sabbatarians who are for keeping the old Jewish Sabbath; the Anti-Sabbatarians, who say that every day is a sabbath to a Christian; the Traskites, who would observe many Jewish ceremonies; the Millenaries, who believe in the reign of Christ and His saints on earth for a thousand years; the Familists; the Etheringtonians; the Fifth Monarchy men; the Muggletonians and many others. It is difficult for us now to understand the eagerness with which obscure points of doctrine were discussed at all times in seventeenth-century England. Religion was the main interest of men's lives, but it was for the most part outward, doctrinal profession, a thing of the intellect and not of the heart and life. W. C. Braithwaite says: "In the keen doctrinal atmosphere of the time, a day's dispute in public between opposing combatants was the most delightful and improving of pastimes. . . . When Thomas

Taylor, who afterwards became a Friend, disputed at Kendal in 1650 on the subject of infant-baptism in the parish church against three other ministers, and had got the better of them, his hearers ran up Kendal Street crying, 'Mr. Taylor hath got the day! Mr. Taylor hath got the day!' with an enthusiasm now reserved for the result of a game of football." [1]

Amidst all this superficial or mainly intellectual interest in religious doctrine, there were many earnest souls, particularly among the Baptists, Familists and Seekers, whose one desire was to find God for themselves and whose earnestness in the quest puts to shame the easy-going indifference of many in the present day. Robert Barclay in his *Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth*, tells of meetings lasting four hours on Sunday morning and another four in the afternoon. Another writer tells us of a "Seeker" Society at Bristol whose members "kept one day in the week in fasting and prayer, so that when this day came we met together early in the morning, and did not taste anything." They sat down, sometimes in silence and sometimes in prayer and thus passed the whole day "greatly bowed and broken before the Lord in humility and tenderness."

The Familists or "Family of Love" came into existence on the Continent about the same time as the Anabaptists. Their founder, Henry Nicholas, attached great importance to the life corresponding with the profession, and resembled George Fox also in emphasizing the value of silence and of quiet waiting upon God to hear and understand His will. Nicholas regarded himself as a prophet, just as truly inspired by God as any in the Scriptures, and believed that the "House of Love" which he was called to establish, was God's latest revelation for which the world had been waiting. In England his followers for more than a hundred years bore faithful witness to the spiritual nature of religion. They taught that forms and ceremonies are of no importance compared with the realization of God's presence and a life lived in the power of His Spirit. They were, however, hampered by defective organization and by weaknesses due to over-mysticism, and by the middle of the seventeenth century all that was essential in their message was being proclaimed by the Quakers under a wiser leadership and in a wider spirit of human brotherhood.

The Familists were often confused with the Seekers whom

[1] *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 17–18.

they closely resembled, and from whom we know certainly that a number of the first adherents of Quakerism were drawn. The name "Seekers" was first used in England in 1617 and they are described by William Penn as a people who "left all visible churches and societies and wandered up and down as sheep without a shepherd, and as doves without their mates, *seeking* their beloved, but could not find Him (as their souls desired to know Him), whom their souls loved above their chiefest joy." [1] Cromwell wrote about his favourite daughter, Lady Claypole, who seems to have joined the movement: "Your sister Claypole is, I trust in mercy, exercised with some perplexed thoughts. She sees her own vanity and carnal mind; bewailing it, she seeks after (as I hope also) what will satisfy. And thus to be a Seeker is to be of the best sect next to a finder, and such an one shall every faithful, humble seeker be at the end." [2]

W. C. Braithwaite says: "These Seekers or Waiters, who felt the insufficiency of the current doctrinal and external religion, and were not yet brought into a deeper, soul-satisfying experience, afforded the most receptive soil in England for the message of Fox. Some of them won their way for themselves into the consciousness of the indwelling light of Christ, and on meeting with Fox or some other Quaker 'Publisher of Truth,' at once claimed spiritual relationship. More often the Quaker message proved like a spark falling in prepared tinder. As we shall see, the first strong group of Friends at Balby near Doncaster consisted of such a community, and the great Quaker convincement in Westmorland and North Lancashire in June 1652, was in fact, the acceptance of Fox and his message by the important community of Seekers which had its centre at Preston Patrick. The expansion into Cumberland in the following year was largely done with the help of Seekers, and when the Quaker Publishers came south in 1654, it was from Seekers, and to a less extent from Baptists, in London, Bristol, and many other places, that they gathered many of their most stable adherents. Indeed, it is not too much to say that over the part of England where Quakerism planted itself most readily the communities of Seekers had already prepared the way." [3]

[1] Introduction to *The Journal of George Fox*.
[2] Carlyle's *Oliver Cromwell*, vol. i., p. 212.
[3] *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 26.

PART II

THE BEGINNINGS OF QUAKERISM

"Under the Commonwealth, Friends were spreading their message through a Puritan England, which for the most part was sympathetic towards them."—W. C. BRAITHWAITE.

CHAPTER V

THE EARLY LIFE OF GEORGE FOX

"Religious movements develop with the help of a favouring environment, but they spring out of great personal experiences. The fresh truth roots itself in life before it can be uttered in a message. This is certainly the case with the Quaker movement of the seventeenth century. It sprang directly from the vital and vitalizing experience of its founder, George Fox, whose purity and sincerity of nature gave his witness extraordinary force."—W. C. Braithwaite, *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 28.

We have seen how the soil was prepared in many and varied ways for the Quaker message. The time was now ripe for its delivery, and we must turn to the life history of the wonderful man who was to be its first exponent.

George Fox, like so many other prophets and great leaders of thought, stands before us at the outset of his career as a lonely figure. William Penn tells us that "from a child he appeared inward, still and observing beyond his years," and the deep soul-conflicts through which he passed seem to have cut him off from human friendships and thrown him back upon himself and on communion with God.

He was born in 1624 and was the son of Christopher and Mary Fox, who lived at the little village of Drayton-in-the-Clay, now called Fenny Drayton, on the Leicestershire border of Watling Street. Their cottage, with its thatched roof, stood less than a mile from the church and Manor House, which were side by side, the church with a wall of solid red bricks, overshadowed by yew-trees and the Manor House surrounded by a moat. Christopher and Mary Fox had several other children besides George, but unfortunately the parish register is defaced just where their names should have been recorded, the wife of the sexton of Fenny Drayton one hundred years later having torn out several pages to cover her jam-pots! There remain, however, entries of baptism of a sister "Dorothy," and a brother "John," Dec. 20, 1629, and another sister,

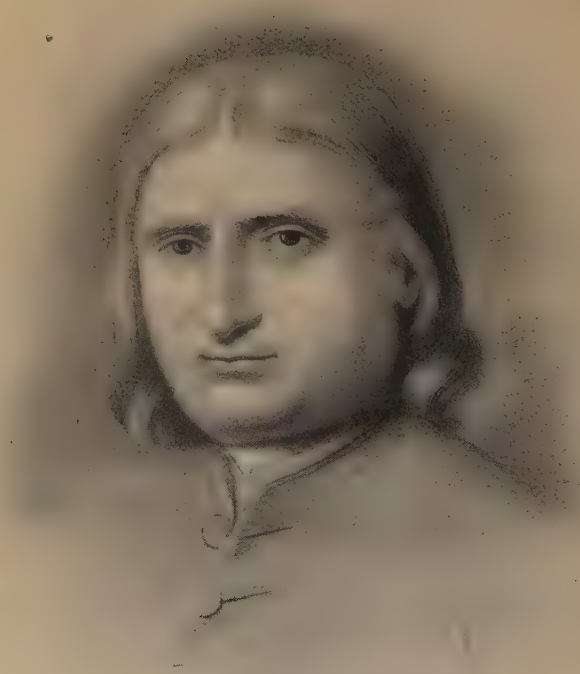
April 9, 1626, "Catherine," is mentioned in Fox's testamentary memoranda.

Both Christopher and Mary Fox were better educated than most people in their position at that time. Christopher Fox was a weaver by trade and quite an important person in the village, where, on account of his honesty, he was called "Righteous Christer." He filled the office of churchwarden and was able to sign his own name, as it may still be seen to-day in bold characters in the parish registers, whereas his fellow churchwarden was only able to affix a cross.

Mary Fox's maiden name was Lago, and it is known that she came of a good family and was of "the stock of the martyrs." This phrase probably refers to the martyrs of the neighbouring town of Mancetter (i.e. Mancetter in Warwickshire), viz. Robert Glover, who was burnt at Coventry in 1555, and Mrs. Joyce Lewis, burnt at Lichfield in 1557, either of whom might have been her grandparent. Several references in Fox's writings to the heroes of the persecution in Queen Mary's reign show us how the stories told him by his mother of the brave sufferings of his ancestors had stirred his spirit and planted the thought, which was to bear such fruit in after years, that Truth is the one thing worth living for, and that he who lives for Truth need not fear any suffering or persecution that may come.

The influences of Fox's home and church life were Puritan, and he thus describes the result of this early training: "When I came to eleven years of age, I knew pureness and righteousness; for while I was a child I was taught how to walk to be kept pure. The Lord taught me to be faithful in all things, and to act faithfully two ways, viz. inwardly to God, and outwardly to man; and to keep to 'Yea' and 'Nay' in all things; . . . and that my words should be few and savoury, seasoned with grace: and that I might not eat and drink to make myself wanton; but for health; using the creatures in their service as servants in their places, to the glory of Him that created them."[1] During these years he also "learned to read pretty well and to write as much as would serve to signify his meaning to others." His parents (especially his mother) were always sympathetic towards their serious-minded, quiet

[1] *Journal*, 1st edn., p. 2.



GEORGE FOX

(After the painting by Sir Peter Lely in Friends' Historical Library, Swarthmore College, U.S.A.)

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boy. It was probably their consideration for what seemed to be his natural bent that caused them to think of training him for the ministry; but Fox says: "Others persuaded to the contrary, whereupon I was put to a man that was a shoemaker by trade and that dealt in wool and sold cattle, and a great deal went through my hands." He learnt the trade of shoemaking well enough to follow it when living at Mansfield, but most of his time with this master was spent in tending sheep, and Penn tells us that "as he took most delight in sheep, so he was very skilful in them, an employment that very well suited his mind in several respects, both from its innocency and solitude, and was a just figure of his after ministry and service." This open-air shepherd life was good for the strengthening both of his body and his spirit. Alone with his flocks in the green fields he had leisure to ponder over many problems that puzzled him. His Bible was his constant companion, and as he studied its pages and earnestly sought for light, his search was rewarded and he became quick to understand God's will and strong to work and suffer for it in the years to come.

The turning point of his life came, as so often happens, through a very simple incident. One day, when he was about nineteen and on business at a fair, he met a cousin who was a Puritan, who had a friend with him also a "professor," and they invited him to join them in drinking a jug of beer. He says: "I, being thirsty, went in with them, for I loved any that had a sense of good. When we had had a glass apiece, they began to drink healths and called for more drink, agreeing together that he that would not drink should pay for all." This custom of drinking healths had come to be one of the chief vices of the age, and Fox "was grieved that any who made a profession of religion" should do such a thing. He laid a groat on the table to pay his share of the reckoning and rose up to go, saying: "If it be so I will leave you." "That night," he says, "I could not sleep, but sometimes walked up and down and sometimes prayed and cried to the Lord, who said unto me: 'Thou seest how young people go together into vanity, and old people into the earth [i.e. earthly things]; and thou must forsake all and be as a stranger unto all.'" "Then," says Fox, "at the command of God, on the ninth day of the seventh month

[September][1] 1643, I left my relations and brake off all familiarity or fellowship with young or old."

Thus it was that during the first unsettled years of the Civil War, Fox began his solitary quest. He travelled from place to place, mostly seeking to be alone with God, but sometimes going to one or other of the great preachers of the day hoping that they might be able to help him, but no one seemed to understand his trouble. One advised him to take to tobacco and psalm-singing, another prescribed physic and blood-letting; his relations wanted him to marry, and others again told him to join the Parliamentary army.

When he heard that his relations were troubled at his long absence he returned home for a time. During this visit, which lasted about a year, he had much talk with Nathaniel Stephens, the "priest" of the parish. Stephens was eighteen years older than Fox, a thorough Calvinist and supporter of infant baptism. He was a man of character with the courage of his convictions, and was ejected for his non-conformity in 1662. At first he thought highly of Fox and was much impressed with his answers and reasoning. But when Fox went into the orchards or fields with his Bible instead of attending church, Stephens lost confidence in him and afterwards became one of his greatest persecutors. His parents also were troubled at his behaviour, though their son tells us that "they saw beyond the priests." It is noteworthy that although Christopher and Mary Fox never joined Friends or dissociated themselves from their own public worship, they seem to have respected their son's opinions and son and parents always retained their love for one another. Fox honoured his father as "an honest man" who had "a seed of God in him," and when his mother died in 1674, he wrote: "I did in verity love her as ever one could a mother, for she was a good, honest, virtuous woman and a right-natured woman, and when I had read the letter of her death, it struck a great weight upon my spirit, and I was in a travail for a quarter of an hour; and when my spirit had gotten through, I saw her in the resurrection and the life, everlastingly with me over all, and father in the flesh also."

After spending about a year in his "own country in

[1] Until the change in the Calendar in 1752, the year began on March 25th, and thus September, as its name implies, was the seventh month.

great sorrows and troubles," he started again on his travels. Wherever he went he carried his Bible with him and learned to know it so well that it was said of him that "though the Bible were lost it might be found in his mouth."

His experiences as he went from place to place threw him more and more upon communion with God. At Barnet he often walked solitary in the Chace to wait upon the Lord. In London he found "all was dark and under the chain of darkness," and could not unburden himself even to his uncle Pickering, who was a Baptist, and "tender." At Mancetter he found the minister "angry and pettish"; at Tamworth the priest was accounted "an experienced man," but proved only "like an empty hollow cask." At Coventry, whilst conversing with Dr. Cradock, Fox chanced to set his foot upon a flower-bed, "at which the man was in a rage, as if his house had been on fire," and all their talk was lost.

At last, after three years of seeking, the light began to break on his troubled soul, and he found deliverance through fellowship "with Christ who hath the key, and opened the door of light and life unto me. . . . He it was that opened to me, when I was shut up and had not hope nor faith." These "openings" (as he significantly calls them) soon led him far beyond the recognized religious teaching of the times. Three truths he especially mentions as having been clearly "opened" to him during these years :—

1. *Outward profession is not enough*, for none are true believers but those who have passed from death unto life by being born of God.

2. *Learning is not enough*, for he tells us : "The Lord opened unto me that being bred at Oxford or Cambridge was not enough to fit and qualify men to be ministers of Christ."

3. *Church-going is not enough*, for God does not dwell in temples made with hands, but in men's hearts.

After this Fox left off going to the priests and turned more to the dissenting people who had, he thought, some "openings." But he still found none among them all who could help him. Then, in the year 1646, when he was twenty-two years of age, there came to him the central experience of his life out of which sprang his vital message which we call Quakerism. He says : "When all my hopes in them, and in all men was gone, so that

I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could tell what to do; then, O! then I heard a voice, which said, '*There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition*,' and when I heard it my heart did leap for joy. . . . My desires after the Lord grew stronger, and zeal in the pure knowledge of God and of Christ alone, without the help of any man, book or writing. For though I read the Scriptures that spake of Christ and of God, yet I knew Him not but by revelation, as He who hath the key did open, and as the Father of Life drew me to His Son by His Spirit. And then the Lord did gently lead me along, and did let me see His love, which was endless and eternal, and surpassing all the knowledge that men have in the natural state, or can get by history or books. And that love did let me see myself as I was without Him. . . . And I saw all the world could do me no good. If I had had a king's diet, palace and attendance, all would have been as nothing: for nothing gave me comfort, but the Lord by His power. . . . The Lord did stay my desires upon Himself, from whom my help came, and my care was cast upon Him alone." [1]

W. C. Braithwaite says: "A passage like this takes us back to the primitive Christian experience of union with Christ. We are where Paul was when it pleased God to reveal His Son in him, and where John was when he wrote: 'He that hath the Son hath the life.' But in 1646 the doctrine of the great Puritan Churches—the Presbyterians, Independents and Particular Baptists—left little room for a first-hand experience of this kind. They held that God had spoken to man through the Scriptures and in the finished work of Christ; they believed that He would speak again in judgment at the second advent; meanwhile man ought not to look for further direct communication. The Scriptures were the one sufficient rule of faith; no further light was needed or to be expected. The day of immediate revelation was past. But now one man in England, driven by his passion for reality, was demanding and receiving a direct experience of truth. He had sought it at the hands of man, but the sincerity of his own heart had laid bare the religious insincerity about him, and he had perforce turned from man in order to keep the integrity of his pure and tender spirit. Then in communion with his deepest self he made his great spiritual discovery. He found in his own spirit the place where

[1] *Journal*, 1st edn., pp. 8–9.

a seed of Divine life was springing up, the place where the voice of a Divine teacher was being uttered, the place that was being inhabited by a Divine and glorious presence. It was the recovery for himself and for England of that immediate contact of the soul with God which had been the living experience of Jeremiah, and the early Church, and the saints of all ages. . . . As we have seen, there were many others in England who had reached or were seeking after this experience, but here was a man who, having won truth as the prize of a great quest, would hold it precious, and give his life in glad devotion to the mission of spreading the light." [1]

He could now say out of his own experience : " I was taken up in the love of God, so that I could not but admire the greatness of His love . . . and I therein clearly saw that all was done, and to be done in and by Christ ; and how He conquers and destroys this tempter, the Devil, and all his works, and is a top of him." The joy of this discovery was so great that he could not keep the good tidings to himself but, as opportunity offered, began to speak to the people, directing them " to the divine light of Christ and His Spirit in their hearts, by which light they might see their sin, and by which light they might also see their Saviour, Christ Jesus, to save them from their sins."

At this time Fox appears to have been living at Mansfield in Nottinghamshire, where he was following his trade of shoemaker, and it seems probable that for another year or two, whilst he felt impelled to tell others of his newly found joy and deliverance, he did not realize that this was to be his life work. His own spiritual preparation was still going forward, often through seasons of deep proving and tribulation. At one time he tells us that it seemed as if he saw in his heart all evil natures, such as those of dogs, swine and vipers, and he cried out in dismay to the Lord, saying : " Why should I be thus, seeing I was never addicted to commit those evils ? " and the Lord answered that it was needful I should have a sense of all conditions, how else should I speak to all conditions ? and in this I saw the infinite love of God. I saw also that there was an ocean of darkness and death ; but an infinite ocean of light and love which flowed over the ocean of darkness." [2]

At another time he tells us : " One morning, as I was

[1] *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 35–36.
[2] *Journal*, 1st edn., p. 13.

sitting by the fire [in the Vale of Beavor], a great cloud came over me, and a temptation beset me; and I sat still. And it was said: 'All things come by nature'; and the elements and stars came over me, so that I was in a manner quite clouded with it. . . . And as I sat still under it, and let it alone, a living hope arose in me, and a true voice arose in me, which said: 'There *is* a living God who made all things.' And immediately the cloud and temptation vanished away and life rose over it all; and my heart was glad and I praised the living God. And after some time I met with some people that had such a notion, that there was no God, but that all things came by nature. And I had a great dispute with them and overturned them, and made some of them confess that there was a living God. Then I saw that it was good that I had gone through that exercise." [1]

There was a large Baptist community in Nottingham and the neighbourhood, but its spiritual life had declined and the members had become scattered. Half of them now met on Sundays, only "to play at shovelboard and to be merry"; the rest were still seeking the light, and about 1647 Fox was attracted to this "shattered" remnant, finding them "a tender people."

At Broughton, on the borders of Leicester and Nottinghamshire, he attended one of their great meetings, and here his mouth was opened, truth was declared and the power of the Lord was over them all. He tells us that he "saw the harvest white, and the seed of God lying thick in the ground, as ever did wheat that was sown outwardly, and none to gather it." From this time his preaching began to attract attention and many came from a distance to see "the young man that had a discerning spirit."

His first work lay mostly in the neighbourhood of Mansfield, and he often availed himself of the custom, which was a common one in those days, for anyone who felt he had a message to deliver to speak after the minister had finished his sermon. Only once do we hear of Fox interrupting a minister, and that was at Nottingham, during these first months of his ministry. He relates how as he was on his way to meeting with other Friends, he saw from the top of a hill the "great steeple-house" and the Lord said to him: "Thou must go

[1] *Journal*, 1st edn., p. 16.

cry against yonder great idol, and against the worshippers therein." He went quietly on to the meeting, but after a time he left Friends sitting together "in the mighty power of the Lord God" and went to the church where the people looked to him like "fallow ground" and the priest in his pulpit like "a great lump of earth." As he listened to the sermon he felt constrained to correct the preacher and cried out: "Oh no, it" (i.e. "the light that shineth in a dark place," spoken of by Peter) "is not the Scriptures, but the Holy Spirit, by which the holy men of God gave forth the Scriptures, whereby opinions, religions, and judgments were to be tried; for it led into all truth." The Jews, he told them, had the Scriptures, and yet they rejected Christ and persecuted Him and His Apostles because although they took upon themselves to try their doctrines by the Scriptures, they did not try them aright, because they tried without the Holy Ghost.[1]

Whilst Fox was speaking the officers came and took him away and put him into "a nasty stinking prison." He was committed for trial at the assizes for disturbing the preacher in his sermon; but his words had made a deep impression upon his hearers, and not the least upon the sheriff, John Reckless, in whose custody he was placed. He sent for him to his house, where his wife met him in the hall, welcoming him with the words, "Salvation is come to our house," and, taking him by the hand, led him in. He stayed there for some time, and had great meetings, and the sheriff, his wife, children and their servants were all changed by the power of the Lord, Reckless himself becoming a Friend. When the assizes came on, an unknown sympathizer offered himself "body for body" on behalf of Fox—the first of many such acts in the annals of early Quakerism, but through some mistake Fox was not brought into court till the judge had risen, and was soon afterwards released.

We gather from the Journal that this Nottinghamshire Baptist community accepted Fox's message almost in a body, and that they formed themselves into a new association under the name of "Children of the Light." This name, chosen on account of the central truth taught by Fox of the light of Christ as the guide to eternal life, was the earliest by which

[1] *Journal*, 1st edn., p. 26.

Friends were known, and the first Friends' meetings were probably largely composed of the members of this community.

One of their number, Elizabeth Hooton, "a very tender woman," was Fox's first convert, and was also the first, after Fox himself, to proclaim the Quaker message. She became one of the most enthusiastic of the Quaker publishers of truth, travelling extensively and enduring much persecution and many imprisonments.

Whilst living at Mansfield, Fox felt it his duty to go and speak to the justices, that they should not oppress the servants in their wages, but do that which was right and just to them. And he exhorted the servants to do their duties and serve honestly. He also tells us that he felt called upon to go and speak to one of the most wicked men in the town, a great drunkard, and reprove him for his evil ways. The man was so impressed that he turned from his wickedness and became an honest, sober man to the astonishment of all.

Summing up his work during this transition period of his life, Fox writes: "Thus the work of the Lord went forward, and many were turned from the darkness to the light within the compass of these three years, 1646, 1647 and 1648. And divers meetings of Friends in several places were then gathered to God's teaching, by His light, spirit and power: for the Lord's power brake forth more and more, wonderfully."

It was now—that is, about the end of 1648 or beginning of 1649—that the definite call came to George Fox to go abroad into the world, which, he says, "was like a briary, thorny wilderness," and when he brought the word of life to it, it "swelled and made a noise like the great raging waves of the sea." But he had found for himself the great reality for which he had been seeking, and it transformed and transfigured for him all the facts of life. To him his discovery was emphatically "glad tidings of great joy to all people," and to be sent forth as a messenger of the good news was, in spite of any suffering it might involve, a privilege and a cause for rejoicing. "I was glad," he says, "that I was commanded to turn people to that inward light, spirit and grace, by which all might know their salvation and their way to God; even that divine Spirit, which would lead them into all truth and which I infallibly knew would never deceive any." "With and by this divine

power and Spirit of God, and the light of Jesus, I was to bring people off from all their own ways, to Christ, the new and living Way; and from their churches (which men had made and gathered), to the Church in God, the general assembly written in heaven, which Christ is the head of; and off from the world's teachers, made by men, to learn of Christ . . . and off from all the world's worships, to know the Spirit of Truth in the inward parts, and to be led thereby; that in it they might worship the Father of spirits. . . . I was to bring people off from Jewish ceremonies, and from heathenish fables, and from men's inventions and windy doctrines . . . with their schools and colleges for making ministers of Christ, who are indeed ministers of their own making, but not of Christ's. And all their images and crosses and sprinkling of infants, with all their holy days (so called) and all their vain traditions . . . which the Lord's power was against: and in the dread and authority thereof was I moved to declare against them all." [1]

Fox's message was, in fact, a prophet call away from all the unreality of external religion to that true knowledge of God which is life eternal and the worship which is in spirit and in truth. He taught also that not only is absolute sincerity essential in man's dealings with God, but in his dealings with his fellow men, and this involved a break with many of the customs and so-called civilities of that ceremonious age. He says: "Moreover, when the Lord sent me forth into the world, He forbade me to put off my hat to any, high or low. And I was required to Thee and Thou all men and women, without any respect to rich or poor, great or small. And as I travelled up and down, I was not to bid people good-morrow or good-even-ing; neither might I bow or scrape with my leg to anyone; and this made the sects and professions to rage. But the Lord's power carried me over all to His glory, and many came to be turned to God in a little time: for the heavenly day of the Lord sprang from on high, and brake forth apace, by the light of which many came to see where they were." [1]

Such was the gospel which in the freshness of his youthful zeal, George Fox felt called to proclaim, and as we follow his story, we shall see with what courage and singleness of purpose he lived up to his early vision, never allowing it to be dimmed

[1] *Journal*, 1st edn., pp. 23–24.

or obscured by selfish aims, or by coward fears of the consequences that obedience might bring. W. C. Braithwaite characterizes this message as "much wider than has been generally recognized, universal rather than sectarian, social as well as religious, wider than even the energy and confidence of Fox was able to compass, the programme not of the founder of a sect, but of the prophet of a new age." [1]

George Fox is so pre-eminently the central figure of the early Quaker movement that it seems worth while to pause for a moment in order to form a mental picture of him from the scanty materials which we possess. We have unfortunately no reliable portrait of him in his youth. The one attributed to Sir Peter Lely, now in the Library of Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania, represents him when in middle or advanced life, as a man with a strong face, thoughtful and dignified, but withal gentle. At twenty-four his figure would be slighter, and there would perhaps be an even intenser fire of enthusiasm in those clear, penetrating eyes, which were always a terror to hypocrites and evil-doers, with their capacity for seeing below the surface of things. He wore his hair long, parted in the middle and falling in natural curls over his shoulders. He refused to crop it, as was the Puritan custom, for, said he, "I have no pride in it and it was not of mine own putting on." His forehead was broad, his nose long and aquiline, and his mouth sensitive but firm. He was of medium height and in later life rather stout, though always a very moderate eater. He dressed in leathern breeches and doublet with a white hat, the leathern dress being chosen for its simplicity and durability.

Physically he was very strong, and endured many hardships in his travels, especially during the early years of his ministry, and later on, such privations and cruelty during his imprisonments as would have killed any ordinary man. His own explanation of his power of endurance was: "The Lord's power carried me over all." He often travelled hundreds of miles on horseback or on foot with very insufficient food, sleeping out of doors, now under a haystack in rain and snow, now with three companions under a hedge, or again, after a day's journey through the snow, sitting until daybreak among furze bushes. His manner was serious and reserved, and his voice

[1] *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 46–47.

clear and commanding. He avoided needless words or talk upon trivial matters and wherever he went his very presence seemed to inspire respect and attention even among his enemies.

Whilst he hated all falseness and hypocrisy and was stern in his rebukes to evil-doers, like all great natures, he was also wonderfully gentle. He loved children and animals, and was exceedingly tender towards all who were young in Christian experience, the seekers, the weak and the erring. In one of his epistles he writes: "No man after he hath beaten his child hateth him ever afterwards, but loveth him (if he repent and amend, so doth the Eternal Father), and if the child be fallen down into the dirt, he doth not go and tumble him more into the dirt or into the ditch and there let him lie in the dirt and ditch, but takes him out and washes him; and so doth the heavenly Father which leads His children by His hand and dandles them upon His knee. And so all that be called fathers in the truth or mothers, their tenderness should be the same to all little children in the truth that can hardly go without leading, that sometimes may fall into the dirt and ditch, and slip aside and then be troubled and cry. To such there should be tenderness shown, and to wash them and help them, and love to such should be manifest; for there is a difference betwixt a stubborn, rebellious and wilful child and one that is penitent." In another epistle he urges forbearance with "such as are tender, if they should be moved to bubble forth a few words and speak in the Seed and Lamb's power." "Let it be your joy," he writes, "to hear or see the springs of life break forth in any."

Of his character, William Penn says: "I write my knowledge and not report, and my witness is true, having been with him for weeks and months together . . . and that by night and by day, by sea and by land, in this and in foreign countries; and I can say I never saw him out of his place, or not a match for every service or occasion. . . .

"He was of an innocent life, no busy body, nor self seeker, neither touchy nor critical. . . . So meek, contented, modest, easy, steady, tender it was a pleasure to be in his company. He exercised no authority but over evil, and that everywhere and in all; but with love, compassion and long suffering. A most merciful man, as ready to forgive as unapt to take or give offence.

"He had an extraordinary gift in opening the Scriptures. . . . But above all he excelled in prayer. . . . The most living, reverent frame I ever felt or beheld, I must say, was his in prayer. And truly it was a testimony he knew and lived nearer to the Lord than other men; for they that know Him most will see most reason to approach Him with reverence and fear.

"In all things," Penn adds, "he acquitted himself like a man, yea a strong man, a new and heavenly-minded man—a divine and a naturalist, and all of God Almighty's making." [1]

[1] Preface to George Fox's *Journal*.

CHAPTER VI

"A GREAT PEOPLE TO BE GATHERED"

"The Quaker religion which Fox founded is something which it is impossible to overpraise. In a day of shams, it was a religion of veracity, rooted in spiritual inwardness, and a return to something more like the original gospel truth than men had ever known in England. So far as our Christian sects to-day are evolving into liberality, they are simply reverting in essence to the position which Fox and the early Quakers so long ago assumed."—WILLIAM JAMES, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 7.

WITH his message and the sense of his call to deliver it glowing hot within him, George Fox set out to convince the world of the nearness of God and the reality of spiritual things.

Although it was so clear to himself, there was much in his message and in his way of delivering it which was very hard for those around him to understand. Already in the very early days these difficulties began, for we read how at Mansfield-Woodhouse, near Mansfield, the congregation fell upon Fox in a rage after he had spoken in the church, and beat him with their hands, Bibles and sticks. They then put him in the stocks and afterwards stoned him out of the town; and at Mansfield itself the meetings of the "Children of the Light" were often disturbed, and they were accused of being false prophets and deceivers.

It is important that we should be fair to both sides, and try to realize how strange many of Fox's words and actions must have seemed to those about him. His occasional raptures puzzled them and they could not understand the thoroughness with which he translated the truths revealed to him into speech and life—as, for instance, when he called the churches "steeple houses" and would not take off his hat or bow, or use the ordinary polite modes of address, but said "thee" and "thou" to everyone. His unusual dress also, and even the power of his personality which attracted or overawed many, all gave colour

to the wild stories that were circulated about him and caused people to believe that he was bewitched and a dangerous spiritual guide.

The more serious charge of blasphemy, so often made against Fox and the early Friends, arose out of a conflict with the Puritan teaching that man must always expect to be sinful in this life, whilst Fox's most emphatic message was that Christ had come, not only to give forgiveness, but to make His dwelling-place in men's hearts, thereby cleansing them from sin and enabling them to live pure and holy lives. To teach otherwise was to make religion an unreal thing, a scheme of salvation intellectually held, instead of an indwelling power able to transform men's lives. Many of the expressions which Fox and his followers used were open to misinterpretation, and in their earnestness they were apt to forget that even the inspired servant of God remains a man, liable to human error and weakness; but the charge of blasphemy (except perhaps in the case of Nayler) was unfounded and due to misunderstanding of their position, for they never claimed any holiness or power apart from the spirit of Christ dwelling in them. This is clearly brought out in Fox's account of his conversation with the magistrates at Derby on the first occasion when this charge was made.

The *Journal* tells us that on Wednesday, October 30, 1650, Fox attended "a lecture" at Derby, where there were many officers of the army, and priests and preachers. "Then," says Fox, "was I moved of the Lord to go up to them. And when they had done I spake to them what the Lord commanded me." For this he and his two companions were taken into custody and charged with blasphemy before Gervase Bennett and Colonel Nathaniel Barton, two magistrates of high standing, who became members for Derbyshire in the "Barebones" Parliament of 1653. They spent eight hours in examining Fox, and he says: "I bid them look unto Christ in them and not unto men, for it is Christ that sanctifies. Then they ran into many words, but I told them they were not to dispute of God and Christ, but to obey Him. And the power of God thundered amongst them, and they did fly like chaff before it, and they put me out of the room often, hurrying me backward and forward. . . .

"At last they asked me whether I was sanctified. I answered 'Yes, for I was in the Paradise of God.' Then they asked

me if I had no sin. I answered: 'Christ my Saviour has taken away my sin and in Him there is no sin.' Then they asked, How we knew that Christ did abide in us. I said: 'By His Spirit, that He hath given us.' They temptingly asked if any of us were Christ. I answered: 'Nay, we were nothing, Christ was all.'" [1]

It was during this examination that Justice Bennett called Fox and his companions "Quakers," either because Fox had bidden him tremble at the word of the Lord, or, as Penn thinks, from the trembling of Friends under the powerful working of the Holy Spirit. In any case this name, originally given in scorn, was quickly taken into general use, and has ever since been the one by which Friends are most widely known.

The jailer, whose name was Thomas Sharman, was at first very bitter against Fox, but one day he said to his wife: "Wife, I have seen the day of judgment, and I saw George there, and I was afraid of him, because I had done him so much wrong." After this he came to Fox's room and said: "I have been as a lion against you, but now I come like a lamb, and like the jailer that came to Paul and Silas trembling." In the morning he went to the justices and told them that he and his house had been plagued for keeping Fox a prisoner, and they confessed that the same thing had happened to them. They then gave Fox leave to walk a mile, hoping their troublesome prisoner would take the opportunity to escape, but they had not realized the stuff of which he was made! Nor would he accept bail offered by his relatives, thinking that to do so would be an admission of guilt.

During his imprisonment, Fox was visited by many inquirers, amongst whom were several earnest-minded Puritan soldiers. His obvious powers of leadership made such an impression upon the authorities that they offered him a commission in one of the companies which were now being raised to serve against Charles Stuart in Scotland. They thought that his personality would attract men to join, and hoped in this way to rid the country of his preaching. His own account of this strange incident gives in a few words the ground of the well-known Quaker testimony against all war. "I told them," he says, "I knew from whence all wars did arise, even from

[1] *Journal*, 1st edn., p. 31.

the lust, according to James's doctrine, and that I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars. But they courted me to accept of their offer, and thought I did but compliment with them. But I told them I was come into the covenant of peace, which was before wars and strifes were."

They were so angry at his refusal that they ordered the jailer to "put him into the dungeon amongst the rogues and felons." This was a much worse place than the House of Correction, where Fox had been confined hitherto. He had no bed, and it was dirty and insanitary. But he was not cast down. "I had faith in God," he says, "and believed I should be delivered in His time," but not yet, "being set there for a service which He had for me to do." The *Journal* gives us some interesting glimpses of what this "service" was. One of his fellow-prisoners was a young woman who had robbed her master and who was sentenced to be hanged for her crime according to the barbarous law then in force. Fox interceded for her with such effect, that although the girl had actually reached the foot of the gallows, she was reprieved, and sent back to prison where "she afterwards came to be convinced of God's everlasting truth." Two other fellow-prisoners—men—who were hanged for trifling offences, he was unable to save, but he had good hopes that they had turned in their hour of need to Christ their Saviour. These and other cases brought home to him so strongly the injustice and evils of the prison system of the day that he was under great sufferings in spirit because of it and "was moved to write to the judges concerning their putting men to death for cattle and money and small matters, and to show them how contrary it was to the law of God in old time," and "what a hurtful thing it was that prisoners should lie so long in jail; showing how that they learned badness one of another, in talking of their bad deeds." [1]

When he was at last set free, in October 1651, Fox returned to his own country-side, but he found his relations "offended" at him, no doubt on account of the wild rumours of his conduct which had reached them, and because he had refused to come home when they offered to give bail and be sureties for his good behaviour. For the time there was no further opening for work there, but this may have decided him to turn his face

[1] *Journal*, 1st edn., pp. 46–48.

northwards where a much wider field of service was awaiting him amongst the groups of "Seekers," with some of whom he had already been in correspondence.

The whole of the following year was spent in arduous travels, sometimes on horseback and sometimes on foot, and as he went from place to place he was so often obliged to sleep out of doors that a report got about that he would not sleep in a bed. He passed through many parts of Yorkshire, the north of Lancashire and Westmorland, and must have travelled in all seven hundred and fifty miles. In most of the places he visited he found groups of earnest "Seekers," or "Children of the Light," with hearts prepared to receive his message. Sometimes the minister and almost the entire congregation were "convinced," and amongst these new converts were many who became associated with Fox as "First Publishers of Truth" throughout the nation.

One of the first places he went to was Balby, near Doncaster, where the important group of Seekers at once threw themselves heartily into his work. Thence he went on his way by Selby to Beverley and Cranswick, then through York to Borrowby, and so by Stokesley through Cleveland to the coast at Staithes, after which he passed to Whitby and Scarborough and over the Wolds to Malton and Pickering; from Pickering over the moors to Cranswick and so to the coast at Ulrome and through Holderness, that "dark corner of the world," to the land's end, then back by Hull to Balby, and after a short round in Lincolnshire, back a third time to Balby, and on by Wakefield and Bradford to Pendle Hill and "the people beyond who were to be gathered." [1]

At Beverley, he tells us, "I was moved of the Lord to go to the steeple-house, which was then a place of high profession. . . . When [the minister] had done, "I was moved to speak to him and to the people in the mighty power of God, and turned them to their teacher, Christ Jesus. And the power of the Lord was so strong that it struck a mighty dread among the people. And the mayor came down to me and spake a few words to me, but none of them had any power to meddle with

[1] This itinerary is taken from W. C. Braithwaite's *Beginnings of Quakerism*, and is based on dates given in the *Journal*.—See *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 65, also Note 2, and Map 3 at end of volume.

me. So I passed away out of the town." The next day he went to see Justice Hotham,[1] and says: "While I was here there came a great woman of Beverley to speak with Justice Hotham about some business; and in discourse she told him that the last "Sabbath day," as she called it, there was an Angel or Spirit came into the church at Beverley, and spake the wonderful things of God, to the astonishment of all that were there, and when it had done, it passed away, and they did not know whence it came nor whither it went; but it astonished all, both priest, professors and magistrates of the town."

It was about Christmas time, 1651, when George Fox came to York and went on Sunday into the great Minster, and when the minister had finished, stood up and said that he had something from the Lord God to say to them. They told him to speak on quickly, for it was frost and snow and very cold weather. "Then," he says, "I told them, This was the word of the Lord God unto them, that they lived in words, but God Almighty looked for fruits amongst them." "As soon as the words were out of my mouth," he continues, "they hurried me out and threw me down the steps; but I got up again without hurt and went to my lodging again and several were convinced there."

At Pickering, an old clergyman named Boyes lent him the school-house for a meeting and was "very lowly and loving." When Fox travelled on, Boyes went with him and they came to a town where the bells were rung to call the people together. When they gathered Fox spoke in the church *yard* to make them understand that the church was no more holy than any other place, and he says: "The Lord gave me a good opportunity amongst them to open things largely unto them, and all was quiet and many were convinced, blessed be the Lord."

Passing on to another place among the moors, Boyes being still with him, the people gathered in great numbers to hear him. "Now," says Fox, "I sat on a haystack and spake nothing for some hours; for I was to famish them from words." The people naturally became restless and kept asking: "When will he begin?" "What does it mean?" "When will he speak?" Boyes urged them to have patience for, said

[1] *See* ante, chap. iii. p. 70.

he, "The people waited upon Christ a long while before He spake." At last he was "moved of the Lord to speak; and they were struck by the Lord's power, and the word of life reached to them and there was a general convincement amongst them." Then they came to Boyes's own church on the moors, and as he passed some of the people called to him saying: Mr. Boyes, we owe you some money for tithes, pray come and take it." But he "threw up his hands and said he had enough; he would have none of it, and praised the Lord he had enough."

Throughout this journey Fox illustrated in his own person the truth, which he says the Lord had spoken to him: "If but one man or woman were raised up by His power to stand and live in the same spirit the apostles and prophets were in, he or she should shake all the country in their profession for ten miles around." At Wakefield the people said that he and his companions made more noise in the country than the coming up of the Scottish army! At Tickhill, near Balby, he was mobbed in the church, but afterwards mounted a wall and preached with such life and power that the priest himself began to tremble and one of the crowd called out: "He is turned a Quaker also." As he travelled from place to place he spoke everywhere—in the markets and churches, by the seashore, and to the country people at work in the fields—of the Day of the Lord that was coming upon all unrighteousness, and that Christ was come to teach His people Himself. Fox tells us that the power of the Lord "shook the earthly and airy spirit in which they held their profession of religion and worship, so that it was a dreadful thing unto them when it was told them: 'The man in leathern breeches is come.'"

The work resulted in the formation of groups of "Children of the Light" in many of the places visited, who, in accordance with Fox's advice, at once began holding meetings of a very simple kind. An account, which has been preserved from Kelk Monthly Meeting, in the East Riding, gives us a description of the first beginnings of a Friends' meeting. It reads: "Now, though many were convinced and did no longer join with the priests of the world in their public worship, yet we had no settled or appointed meetings; but on the first days of the week it was the manner of some of us to go to some town where were friendly people and there sit together, and some-

times confer one with another of the dealings of the Lord with us."

In May 1652 Fox was called to other service, but the work in Yorkshire continued under the leadership of Richard Farnsworth and William Dewsbury and many were "convinced." In the *First Publishers of Truth* a list is given of forty-three names who are called "first-fruits" of Dewsbury's ministry. Amongst them are John Whitehead, the Puritan soldier of Scarborough Castle, and Robert Fowler, of Bridlington Quay, afterwards builder and owner of the famous ship *Woodhouse*.

John Wilhelm Rowntree, in his lecture on "The Rise of Quakerism in Yorkshire," gives particulars which help us to measure to some extent the success of these ardent "First Publishers of Truth," and to understand the conditions under which their work went forward.

He tells us that in 1669, eighteen years after Fox first crossed the borders of Yorkshire, there were fourteen Yorkshire Monthly Meetings, and at least 279 particular meetings, some held in meeting houses and some in private houses. There were, he believes, 464 places in the county where Friends were known to reside. He comments on these figures: "Insecure as these statistics may be, they are not far from the truth, and serve to call up before our inward eye some faint picture of the impress which Fox, Dewsbury, Stephen Crisp, and local apostles like John Whitehead left upon their generation. Through lonely dales, where the bracken reddens at autumn and the trout-streams tumble to the sea; where the long swell of the high moorlands sweeps the horizon; or where the seagulls scream and the spray breaks over the rocks, or the low sand-hills melt down the dismal coast; by flat meadow-lands with kine and fields of corn; over high, bare hills where the west wind storms with salt and sting of the Atlantic; through the great vale with its fair glimpses of cathedral towers; through narrow streets filled with the roar of the shingle on the slipway, and the smell of fish and shipping; into broad market-squares, among the wains and cracking whips and stumbling teams; to city and hamlet, seaport and inland town, fearless and loving, come the Children of the Light.

"Even dry figures can stir us if we let them speak. Those

were great days of high courage, noble sacrifice and rich fruit." [1]

On leaving Yorkshire, Fox came to Pendle Hill, on the borders of Lancashire, and "was moved of the Lord" to go up to the top of it, which he did "with much ado, it was so very steep and high," but the toil was soon forgotten, for it proved to him a veritable mount of vision, whose inspiration carried him triumphantly forward to fresh spiritual conquests. Pendle Hill rises only 1831 feet above sea level, but it has a bleak summit with a wide view away over the moors to the north, and to the west as far as the Irish Sea. "From the top of this hill," says Fox, "the Lord let me see in what places He had a great people to be gathered." That night at the inn he "declared Truth to the man of the house, and writ a paper to the priests and professors declaring 'the day of the Lord and that Christ is come to teach His people Himself.'" Then a still clearer vision came to him and he saw "a great people in white raiment by a riverside, coming to the Lord." [2]

After this he travelled on alone, over the moors and through the dales, "declaring Truth" through all the towns as he went and advising those he met "to fear God, which, together with his grave look or countenance, did much alarm the people." Thus he passed through Wensleydale to Sedbergh, and there on Whitsun eve, at the little hamlet of Brigflatts, a mile or two outside the town, he found the people of his vision. Brigflatts was a settlement of flax-weavers, whose houses lay in the low flats bordering the rushing river Rawthey, and we can imagine that Fox, who was himself a weaver's son, would feel at home amongst the whirr of the looms in this colony of weavers of snowy linen; and moreover he soon found that they were a company of "Seekers"—thirsty, unsatisfied souls—in fact the very ones to whom he had been directed—"the people in white raiment by the riverside." [3]

There followed some happy days of fellowship, for the "Seekers" welcomed him and flocked round him to hear the message for which they had been longing, whilst he with a full

[1] *Essays and Addresses*, pp. 38–40. [2] *Journal*, 1st edn., p. 72.
[3] Read The People in White Raiment, chapter of *Quaker Saints*, by Violet Hodgkin.

heart praised the Lord, seeing in them the beginning of the fulfilment of his vision.

The day after his arrival, Whit-Sunday, June 6, 1652, he attended one of their meetings, held at Borrat, near Sedbergh, the home of Colonel Gervase Benson. Here not only many of the flax-weavers, but also some of the leading people of the neighbourhood, accepted his message, including Colonel Benson himself and his wife Dorothy, Richard Robinson, Major Bousfield, "and many others, who, several of them, afterwards received him joyfully into their houses, and believed in the Truth by him preached and became obedient to the same."

Fox's whole life and preaching was devoted to bringing men back to Christ their Teacher, and to the knowledge in their own lives of that anointing power which was first given on the day of Pentecost, and on that Whit-Sunday morning the same spiritual power was present with him and fell upon his hearers as he gave them his "message from the Lord," "that they should all come together again and wait to feel the Lord's power and spirit in themselves, to gather them together to Christ, that they might be taught of Him who says, 'Learn of Me.'"

Fox stayed on over the annual fair held at Sedbergh on Whit-Wednesday. This was the great event of the year, an occasion for much business as well as merry-making, and the gentry and country people flocked to it from miles round. Seventeenth-century Sedbergh was a busy, prosperous town, the centre of life of the countryside. The church, with its massive grey tower and beautiful clerestory windows, stood near the open square in the centre of the town. But the Separatist spirit was strong here, for we are told that in these days of Oliver's Protectorate there were no fewer than forty-eight different religious sects among the few hundred inhabitants of the place! Many had tried them all in turn and yet found no real food for their souls, and it was to these earnest seeking ones that Fox was sent.

In the early morning he held a meeting, with a few Puritans, in a private house, but afterwards went out and stood on a bench under the great spreading yew-tree in the church-garth. He must have been a commanding figure, dressed in his leather suit and with his hair hanging down in ringlets under the broad brim of his hat, and a crowd soon collected, curious to

hear what this stranger had to say. Besides the "Seekers" who had gathered, there were the country squires and dames, farmers with their wives and daughters, lads and lasses who had come to the annual hiring, and it is possible also some of the masters and boys from the then famous Grammar School. We are told that he preached for several hours "to a great auditory. his testimony concerning the new way of the Light of Christ Jesus leading to the Kingdom of Heaven, more clearly than heretofore had been preached." When a captain asked why Fox would not go into the church, for that was the proper place to preach in, he fearlessly told them that their beautiful church, the pride of Sedbergh, was only a building of lime and stone and wood, for they themselves were the true Church, their souls and bodies were the true temples which the Spirit of God had chosen to dwell in. They had never heard such teaching before, and one of the Separatist preachers, Francis Howgill, said: "This man speaks with authority and not as the Scribes." "Many people," says Fox, "were glad at the hearing of the Truth declared, and received it with joy." "And there came one [Captain] Henry Ward, and he said my very eyes pierced through him, and he was convinced of God's everlasting truth and lived and died in it, and many more was convinced there at that time."

After the meeting he went home with Thomas Blaykling and his son John, who lived at Draw-well, only a mile and a-half away. Ernest E. Taylor has given us this interesting description of Draw-well Farm: "The house inhabited by the Blayklings may still be seen. Its thick walls, small windows and rooms, with the clear well behind, must be almost in the same condition as in the week we are remembering." It stands on the sunny slope of a hill overlooking the River Lune, which here forms the boundary between Westmorland and Yorkshire.

Fox spent three restful days in this quiet home, and on the following Sunday went with John Blaykling to a great meeting which the Seekers were holding at Firbank chapel, high up on the fellside on the Westmorland bank of the Lune. Howgill and Audland were the preachers that day, and a large company had gathered, many of them doubtless in the hope of hearing Fox again. When the morning meeting was over Fox gave notice of another to be held in the afternoon, and whilst most

went home to their dinners, he went to a brook and drank a little water and then came and sat down on the top of a rock. In the afternoon above a thousand people, with several of their preachers, gathered to hear him. Fox records that "all the teachers of that congregation (as well as several hundreds of the other listeners) were convinced of God's everlasting truth that day." He "declared God's everlasting truth and word of life freely and largely for about the space of three hours, directing all to the Spirit of God *in themselves*, that they might be turned from darkness to the light . . . and by the Spirit of Truth might be led into all Truth. . . . That they might all come to know Christ their Teacher, their Counsellor, their Shepherd to feed them and their Bishop to oversee them and their Prophet to open to them, and to know their bodies to be temples of God and Christ for them to dwell in . . . turning the people to the Spirit of God and from the darkness to the light, that they might believe in it and become children of the light."

Many thought it strange to see a man preaching on a hill and not in their church. "Whereupon," says Fox, "I was moved to open to the people that the steeple house and the ground whereon it stood were no more holy than that mountain . . . but Christ was come who ended the temple and its worship and the priests and their tithes, and that all should now hearken unto Him."

Amongst those who were convinced at this meeting were young John Audland, the linen draper, of Crosslands, and his Kendal bride, who before her marriage used to meet with some of her friends to wait upon God in silence or in prayer and who had therefore welcomed Fox's teaching as that which she had already experienced. They took Fox home with them and he stayed there till the following Wednesday, when he went with Audland to a meeting at Preston Patrick chapel. This was a large gathering held once a month, and was the rallying point for the groups of Seekers amongst whom Fox had been labouring. Here he again declared his message "in the mighty power of God" to a receptive audience numbering several hundreds, most of whom "were effectually reached to the heart and convinced of the truth that very day, for it was the day of God's power." [1]

[1] Taken from an account in *First Publishers of Truth*, pp. 244–245, by Thomas Camm, who was present as a schoolboy of twelve.

CAMSGILL, PRESTON PATRICK

(See pp. 105 and 117)

(From a painting by Alfred Rawlings)

From Preston Patrick, Fox went to the house of Thomas Camm at Camsgill [1] and then passed on to Kendal, Underbarrow, Crossthwaite, and so into Cartmel and Furness, thus completing a fortnight of strenuous work, of which W. C. Braithwaite says: "This crowded fortnight was the creative moment in the history of Quakerism. In the freshness of his powers and of his experience Fox had a living message, which he uttered with prophetic authority, and both the message and the prophetic messenger answered the yearnings and the hopes of a strong community of earnest-hearted Seekers. Under the influence of half a dozen powerful meetings and of the personal intercourse with Fox, enjoyed by his hosts and their friends, a great company was gathered in. Many of these became the heroic pioneers of the new movement, overcoming the buffetings of opposers and persecutors by their invincible faith." [2]

[1] Camsgill had been one of the meeting places of the "Seekers" and became henceforth a centre of Quaker life and work.

[2] *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 86.

CHAPTER VII

THE FIRST "PUBLISHERS OF TRUTH"

"From the dales and fells and from the countrysides of the North went out a band of preachers whose names are hardly known to the historian, but whose lives and teaching had the deepest influence on seventeenth-century England. Simple yeomen most of them, whose message came more strongly through the spoken word than the written page: men whose writings make difficult reading after two centuries and a half of time, but of whose spirit we can in some measure get glimpses in the brief spiritual autobiographies which not a few left behind them, and in the 'testimonies' which their friends published after their death to bear witness to the truth for which they had lived."—T. EDMUND HARVEY, *The Rise of the Quakers*, p. 71.

IN the present chapter we will leave for a time the narrative of Fox's travels in order to make the acquaintance of some of the Seekers who were gathered in during his northern tour, and who became his co-workers in spreading the Quaker message throughout the nation.

We shall remember that one of the first places Fox visited when he turned his face northwards was Balby, near Doncaster, where there was an important group of "Seekers," who had probably invited him to visit them. Many of these had come independently to the Quaker experience and at once joined the new movement. These included Richard Farnsworth, Thomas Aldam, his mother, his wife Mary, and his two sisters, with their husbands, John and Thomas Killam, most of whom travelled extensively in the service of Truth, Farnsworth and Aldam in particular becoming able leaders.

Richard Farnsworth was one of the most important Publishers of Truth in the northern counties. He was a man of good education, and in his early manhood had been an ardent Puritan. But when he was about twenty-one he began to have doubts about his religious profession, and through Bible study and the enlightenment of God's spirit he came to see that the true Church is built of *living* stones and that outward baptism and communion cannot change the heart nor give food

to the soul. Fox's message was therefore the echo of his own experience, and he was ready at once to join heartily in the work. Besides his service in the North, Farnsworth also laboured incessantly in the northern Midlands with Aldam, Dewsbury, Nayler, Goodaire and others. The service was often interrupted by one or more of the messengers being "clapped into prison," either for "causing a disturbance" in church, or for refusing to uncover to a magistrate, or sometimes on a charge of blasphemy; but there were always others to carry on the work, and everywhere they went many were gathered in. The following extract from one of Farnsworth's letters in 1654 gives us a vivid picture of the zeal and fearless confidence with which he gave his message:

"[The Lord] hath raised up a pretty, sweet people in these parts: there is near a hundred that keep constant at one meeting in Warwickshire, and there is many at Leicester and that-a-ways, and towards Lichfield, and towards Swannington the river begins to divide into three heads; we had three meetings the last first-day and sweetly carried on. We are throng in our harvest. I have had two set meetings with the priests . . . and they are even teared to pieces: the sword is sharp, the horse swift, the rider active, the armour proved. . . . I had three great battles while Thomas [Goodaire] was absent, one sore battle with the great Baptists in Staffordshire, but conquered Goliath . . down, down they fall. . . . We shall divide into three or four heads and march about, but I believe I shall stay with the camp, for the arrows and bullets are shot at me on every side, yet I have a good headpiece that a sword cannot enter."

Amongst the opponents with whom Farnsworth came into conflict was the great Puritan divine, Richard Baxter. Although himself a man of deep spiritual experience, who believed in the importance of "well grounding men in their religion, and especially of the witness of the indwelling spirit," Baxter seems from the first to have had his mind poisoned against the Quakers and never to have shaken off the prejudices which prevented him from any sympathetic understanding of their position. It is perhaps well for us to see how what we regard as courage and zeal in our early Friends was looked upon by outsiders, and even by so saintly a man as Baxter. He says: "The Quakers among us are the ignorant, proud, giddy sort of pro-

fessors, first made Separatists . . . and then drawn further by Popish subtlety, and now headed with some secret dissembling Friars, and by them and by the devil enraged against the ministers of Christ, and set upon the propagating of the substance of Popery." And again: "There were very few experienced, humble, sober Christians that ever I heard of that turn to them; but it's the young, raw professors and women, and ignorant, ungrounded people that were but novices and learners in the principles, and such as are notorious for self-conceitedness and pride, being wise in their own eyes."

Thomas Aldam's experience had been very similar to that of Farnsworth, and like him he at once gladly received Fox's message and began to publish it abroad to others.

It was probably at the suggestion of these Balby Seekers that Fox went on to Lieutenant Roper's house near Wakefield, where James Nayler and Thomas Goodaire came to see him, and where William Dewsbury and his wife Ann, after being present at an evening meeting, joined Fox as he walked in the fields in the moonlight and received the Truth. All these not only joined the new movement, but were amongst its most earnest pioneers.

William Dewsbury, "perhaps the sweetest and wisest of the early Friends,"[1] was about the same age as Fox and had passed through a very similar spiritual experience. He was a shepherd in his youth, but when the Civil War broke out he became a soldier, joining with those who said that they fought for the Gospel. Amongst his Puritan comrades, however, his soul found no rest, for the letter of the Scriptures was their gospel and there was none to tell him of Christ as the Saviour from sin. At last the Lord revealed to him that His love cannot be attained in any outward ways and his mind was turned within to hear what God Himself would say. Thus he was taught that the Kingdom of God is within, and the real enemies are the spiritual ones in our own hearts, who must be fought spiritually. He was taught, too, that this spiritual warfare is the only one in which Christians must engage, so he left the army, and when Fox came and preached near Wakefield, Dewsbury received his words as the truth which his own heart had already learned. He became a very zealous preacher amongst

[1] *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 63.

Friends and suffered many imprisonments, including nineteen years at Warwick—in fact, his life may be said to have been passed in prison, with brief intervals of freedom. Those intervals were filled with untiring labour, but the years of imprisonment were no less fruitful, for the realized presence of Christ made him strong and joyful. His sympathetic nature could see the good in all and enabled him to act as mediator in reconciling Nayler to Friends after his fall : and of the Wilkinson-Story controversy he wrote : "It hath been a greater exercise and trouble to me than all the sharp persecutions and imprisonments I have endured for the Word of God."

During his first four years at Warwick he was kept a close prisoner, but he wrote a series of letters to his fellow-sufferers, glowing with his own spirit of triumphant joy. They are addressed, for example, "To all the faithful and suffering members in all holes, prisons and gaols," "This for dear Friends in London and them that are aboard the ship in order to transportation," "For the dear daughters of Sion, whom the Lord hath or shall suffer their dear and tender husbands to be separated from them beyond the seas or elsewhere for the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ." "When Sion's enemies," he once wrote, "puts [the Lord's servants] in holes and dungeons, God makes a prison more comfortable than a pleasant palace and fetters of iron far surpassing chains of gold : yea, He causeth them to sing in tribulation as Paul and Silas did in the stocks."

His first wife, Ann Dewsbury, was with him when he visited Fox in 1652 and seems to have shared his religious convictions, for they both "confessed Truth and received it," and soon afterwards he speaks of the call coming to him to leave wife and children and "to run to and fro to declare to souls where their Teacher is—the light in their consciences." His second wife was Alice Meades, of Warwick, to whom he was married in May, 1667, after the severity of his confinement had been somewhat relaxed. In 1672 he was discharged from Warwick goal by a royal pardon, which liberated hundreds of Friends all over the kingdom, and for a few years he had liberty to travel and visited the North and West, "having much upon him while the door was open." At the time of the Popish plot in 1678 he was again made prisoner and remained in Warwick gaol till 1685.

During these years he helped to maintain himself by making shoelaces, and a letter from him to Benjamin Lindley, of Darlington, has been preserved, asking for his custom : "If thou hast any occasion for laces, so it do not prejudice taking laces of Friends [in prison] at York."

As he had lost his second wife before his return to Warwick, his little grand-daughter of twelve years, Mary Sam, obtained leave from the governor of the prison to come and live there so as to wait upon him. This she did most lovingly until she died of gaol fever in April 1680. Dewsbury tells of some of her last words and of her peaceful passing away when "the chimes were going four" and of his promise to follow her "as fast as the Lord orders my way." It had been Mary's own wish to come, for no older person was allowed and she felt clearly that her place was with her grandfather, who needed the help which she rejoiced to give him. She must have been a true comforter to the lonely prisoner, and the story of her courage and devotion is one of the most beautiful in our Quaker annals.

Dewsbury was released from Warwick in 1685, and although much broken in health by his long imprisonments, he travelled to London to attend the Yearly Meeting of 1688, but was obliged to leave before it began and with difficulty got back to Warwick, where he "fell asleep in Christ" on June 17, 1688.

Of his own many prison experiences, William Dewsbury gave this wonderful testimony on his death-bed : "I can never forget the day of God's great power and blessed appearance, when He first sent me to preach the everlasting Gospel and proclaim the day of the Lord to the people. Therefore, Friends, be faithful, and trust the Lord your God, for this I can say, I never since played the coward, but as joyfully entered prisons as palaces, telling mine enemies to hold me there as long as they could, and in the prison-house I sang praises to my God ; and esteemed the bolts and locks put upon me as jewels ; and in the name of the eternal God I alway got the victory ; for they could keep me no longer than the determined time of my God."

W. C. Braithwaite says of Dewsbury : "To those who look below the surface of early Quaker history to its hidden springs of strength, the great heart held fast at Warwick, whose unconfinable love streamed its spiritual life through the whole fellowship, beats at the very heart of the movement, for it

drew an infinite warmth and tenderness from the heart of God." [1]

James Nayler, who was convinced at the same time as Dewsbury, also became one of the ablest and most trusted leaders of the Quaker movement. He was the son of "goodman Nayler," "goodman" being the term then in use for a yeoman; and he calls himself a husbandman. He was some eight years older than Fox, and had served eight or nine years in the Parliamentary army as quartermaster under General Lambert, who describes him as "a man of a very unblameable life and conversation." When Nayler, together with Francis Howgill, was taken before the justices in 1653 and committed to Appleby gaol on a charge of blasphemy, he gave such an account of his spiritual experiences that one of the Puritan magistrates, Anthony Pearson, was convinced as he sat on the bench, never having believed before that such immediate revelation of God to the soul was possible. "I was at the plough," Nayler told them, "meditating on the things of God, and suddenly I heard a Voice saying unto me: 'Get thee out from thy kindred, and from thy father's house.' And I had a promise given in with it. Whereupon I did exceedingly rejoice, that I had heard the Voice of that God which I had professed from a child but had never known Him.

"Colonel Briggs: 'Didst thou hear that Voice?'

"Nayler: 'Yes, I did hear it, and when I came at home I gave up my estate . . . but not being obedient in going forth, the wrath of God was upon me . . . but, after I was made willing, I began to make some preparation, as apparel and other necessaries, not knowing whither I should go, but shortly afterwards, going agateward [i.e. on the road] with a friend from my own house, having on an old suit, without any money, having neither taken leave of my wife or children, not thinking then of my journey, I was commanded to go into the West, not knowing whither I should go, nor what I was to do there, but, when I had been there a little while, I had given me what I was to declare, and ever since I have remained, not knowing to-day what I am to do to-morrow.'

"Colonel Briggs: 'What was the promise that thou hadst given?'

[1] *Second Period of Quakerism*, pp. 451–452.

"Nayler: 'That God would be with me, which promise I find made good every day.'

"Colonel Briggs: 'I never heard such a call as this in our time.'

"Nayler: 'I believe thee.'" [1]

Anthony Pearson was a justice in three counties and became a most useful member of the Quaker community, travelling long distances in the service of Truth, taking a leading part in matters of organization and in efforts to mitigate the sufferings of his fellow-members and giving the hospitality of his house to travelling ministers.

Of James Nayler we shall have to speak, when we come to the sad story of his fall, but our present purpose is to give him his place amongst those who had won their way to the light before they ever met the Quakers, and so were ready at once to join the fellowship and to help in spreading the Truth.

The next names who deserve special mention are those of Francis Howgill and John Audland, the preachers at the Firbank chapel meeting.

John Audland, in 1652, was about twenty-two years of age, and is described as "of a sweet, ruddy and amiable countenance and of a cheerful spirit, immortality shined in his face and his voice was as thunder." He had been an eminent preacher among the Westmorland Seekers since he was twenty, but realized at once, under Fox's preaching, the emptiness of his high profession, and used to say: "Ah! . . . what have we been labouring for? . . . All our building tumbles down . . . the Day of the Lord is upon it and His word as a fire consumes it as dry stubble. . . . 'Tis a Saviour that I long for; 'tis Him that my soul pants after; oh! that I may be comprehended into His life and overshadowed with His glory." He became an earnest pioneer of the Quaker message, especially at Bristol, where, with his friend John Camm, he worked unceasingly, shortening his life by the hardships and persecution he underwent. When dying at the age of thirty-four, he said: "Ah! those great meetings in the Orchard at Bristol I may not forget! I would so gladly have spread my net over all, and have gathered all, that I forgot myself, never considering the inability of my body. But it is well. My reward is with me, and I am con-

[1] *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 62.

PRESTON PATRICK CHAPEL

"A true copy of the church before this was restored by Paley of Lancaster." In this chapel was held the momentous meeting which George Fox attended, in 1652. (See pp. 104–105)

(Photographed from a water-colour made by Canon Weston, Vicar of Ravensworth about 1848)

tent to give up and be with the Lord ; for that my soul values above all things."

His wife, Anne, also became a powerful preacher. Early in 1654, when she was twenty-seven, we hear of her preaching at Auckland, in Durham, on a market day. She was thrown into prison, but continued to speak to the people through the windows, so that many were much moved by her words. The next winter she and Mabel Camm (wife of John Camm) preached at Banbury and were the means of leading several hundred people into the light of Christ so that a large meeting was gathered as well as meetings in other places near by. The mayor of Banbury, however, put her into prison, and when Jane Waugh, a serving maid in John Camm's family, came to visit her, she was also imprisoned, and the two women passed the winter in "a close, nasty place, several steps below ground, on the side whereof was a common sewer that received much of the mud of the town, that at times did stink sorely ; besides frogs and toads did crawl in their room and no place for fire, yet . . . God's presence and peace being with them, made their nasty, stinking gaol a palace." In 1656 Anne Audland wrote to Margaret Fell : "This is indeed a place of joy, and my soul doth rejoice in the Lord. I continue a prisoner in Banbury, but I witness freedom in the Lord."

When Fox visited them, these strenuous days were unthought of by the young couple ; but no doubt they drew some of the strength and inspiration which enabled them to go through them so victoriously from the quiet, happy time of fellowship which he spent with them in their home at Crosslands.

Francis Howgill, the other preacher at the Firbank meeting, was twelve years older than Audland, and had been a tailor and farmer. He tells us that from twelve years old he set his heart to know God, but, imagining Him to be at a distance, failed to find Him. He turned from one sect to another and spent all his spare money on books, but could not find peace. At last, "after much hurrying hither and thither," it was revealed to him that the Lord would teach His people Himself and so he waited in expectation of the fulfilment of this promise. When he heard Fox preach, he recognized at once the truth he had been seeking, and he says : "I believed the eternal word of truth and that of God in my own conscience sealed to

it; and so not only I, but many hundreds more, who thirsted after the Lord."

When Howgill and Audland joined the Quakers they felt it right to return the money which they had received for preaching, which "made the priests and professors the more to rage."

Howgill did valiant service for the truth in the North, in London and Bristol, in Ireland, and, in fact, there were few parts of the country which he did not visit. In the winter of 1662–3 he had travelled more than ever, "no more weary than the first day the sickle was put into the harvest," but soon afterwards, in consequence of suspicions that Friends were implicated in a plot in the North, he was arrested in Kendal market and, when tried at Appleby in August 1663, was præmunired and lay in the prison there until his death in 1669. He suffered much for want of fresh air and from the tyranny of his gaoler, but wrote from his prison to his fellow-sufferers: "The light of God's countenance is lifted up and His favour and love and strengthening power felt in the inward man, which balances all and weighs down the scale of present trouble and affliction."

After Howgill and Audland we must mention Edward Burrough and John Camm, who were the companions of their future labours. Edward Burrough was only nineteen at the time of his convincement, and had been well-educated and carefully trained by Christian parents, but he says of himself: "I had the world in my heart," and when Fox came, speaking a language which he knew not, he saw that he was in the prodigal state and had no peace until he separated himself from the glory of the world and joined the despised Quakers. Then, although deserted by his former acquaintances and turned out of his home by his parents, his soul found in Christ "full satisfaction, joy and content." Howgill, who was his fellow-worker and knew him well, tells us that "in his natural disposition he was bold and manly, dexterous and fervent—and what he took in hand he did it with his might—loving, kind and courteous, merciful and flexible and easy to be entreated," and this character is well borne out by the records we have of the youthful enthusiasm with which he carried on pioneer work in London, Bristol, Ireland and other places.

In 1654 he, with his friend Howgill, set out to "conquer London," and with such success that in less than a year's time there were so many "convinced" in the city that part of "an ancient great house" in Aldersgate was taken for a meeting-place, which was called "the Bull and Mouth Meeting," from the sign of the inn that occupied the other part of the building. This "new hired great tavern chapel," as their opponents called it, held one thousand people, and we have a vivid account by an eye-witness, William Crouch, of Burrough's work at one of these meetings. "I have beheld him," Crouch says, "filled with power by the Spirit of the Lord . . . when the room which was very large hath been filled with people, many of whom have been in uproars, contending one with another. . . . In the midst of all which noise and contention this servant of the Lord hath stood upon a bench with his Bible in his hand . . . speaking to the people with great authority from the words of John vii. 12, 'And there was much murmuring among the people concerning Him,' to wit, Jesus, 'for some said, He is a good man; others said, Nay; but He deceiveth the people.' And so suitable to the present debate amongst them that the whole multitude were overcome thereby, and became exceedingly calm and attentive and departed peaceably with seeming satisfaction."

A still more striking proof of his courage and of his capacity for adapting his message to his hearers is given by Sewel, who says: "At London there is a custom in summer time, when the evening approaches, and tradesmen leave off working, that many lusty fellows meet in the fields, to try their skill and strength at wrestling, where generally a multitude of people stands gazing in a round. Now it so fell out that Edward Burrough passed by the place where they were wrestling, and standing still among the spectators, saw how a strong and dexterous fellow had already thrown three others, and was now waiting for a fourth champion, if any durst venture to enter the lists. At length, none being bold enough to try, E. Burrough stepped into the ring . . . and having looked upon the wrestler with a serious countenance, the man was not a little surprised, instead of an airy antagonist, to meet with a grave and awful young man; and all stood amazed at this sight, eagerly expecting what would be the issue of this combat." His fearlessness won

the attention of the crowd, to whom he "preached zealously; and though," says Sewel, "many might look upon this as a novelty, yet it was of such effect that some were convinced of the truth, for he was a breaker of stony hearts," though he could also "speak a word of consolation to those that were of a broken heart. . . . Indeed, he was one of those valiants whose bow never turned back . . . nay, he was such an excellent instrument in the hand of God that even some mighty and eminent men were touched to the heart by the power of the word of life which he preached." [1] His friends called him that "Son of Thunder and Consolation." [2]

London and the work there always remained very dear to Edward Burrough, and when in 1662 he heard at Bristol that the storm of persecution had broken upon his beloved friends there, he felt called to join them, and said to Bristol Friends: "I am now going up to the city of London again, to lay down my life for the gospel and suffer among Friends in that place." Soon after his arrival he was arrested at the "Bull and Mouth" meeting and condemned to Newgate for a breach of the newly passed Quaker Act. The gaol was overcrowded with Quakers, so that many of them had no place to sleep, even on the ground, and we are not surprised to hear that Burrough caught the gaol fever and died in February 1663, after eight months' imprisonment, "to the unutterable grief of very many and unspeakable loss to the Church of Christ," as Thomas Ellwood, who for a short time shared his imprisonment, sorrowfully records. He was only twenty-eight years of age, and passed away in much peace, saying: "Now my soul and spirit is centred into its own being with God."

John Camm was a prosperous farmer of Camsgill, near Preston Patrick, and was another who was convinced at the Firbank chapel meeting. At that time he was about forty-seven years of age and had sometimes preached to the Westmorland Seekers. When Fox's message came home to him, he devoted himself, at great sacrifice of his worldly interests, to spreading the truth. He travelled widely with young John Audland, and was with him in Bristol during the wonderful weeks of ingathering, when both spent themselves beyond their strength. Although wasting away with consumption, he con-

[1] Sewel, I, pp. 149–150. [2] See title-page of his collected works.

tinued his itinerating work almost to the close of his life, often when unable to get on or off his horse without help. His last days were spent peacefully in his home at Camsgill. "My outward man," he said, "daily wastes and moulders . . . but my inward man revives and mounts upward towards its place and habitation in the heavens."

Another ardent young Quaker "Publisher" was James Parnell, of whose work and sufferings we shall speak more fully in a later chapter. A visit to George Fox in Carlisle Gaol in 1654 was the decisive moment in his life, and although only sixteen, he at once began to preach with great power. Steven Crisp, of Colchester, a man of good education, was convinced under his ministry in 1655—"hewen down like a tall cedar"—as he himself describes his experience. Crisp became one of the most eminent of Quaker preachers, serving the Society faithfully all through its strenuous formative period till his death in 1692 at the age of 64. Colchester was a manufacturing centre, famous for its "unsophisticated" serges and bays, and had important business connections with Holland. Steven Crisp was a weaver by trade and soon became the leading Friend of the town. He learned Dutch, and visited the various groups of Friends in Holland no less than thirteen times, carrying on the work which Ames and Caton had begun. Dutch Friends loved him as a father, for whether present or absent, they were always sure of his sympathy and help.

He also travelled extensively in England. We have not many verbatim reports of the sermons of our early Friends, but a certain Nathaniel Crouch (not a Friend), published in 1693–4 thirty of Steven Crisp's, which had been taken down in shorthand, and which show us clearly that he laid the emphasis, not on doctrine, but on a life of loving obedience to the will of God. Two quotations will serve as samples. "There is a people raised by God that feel life in their worship, in their families, in their conversations and in their behaviour towards their relations. They do what they do as to God. Many lads and lasses, men-servants and women-servants, they do their work and service, not barely to please their master and mistress, but to please God: the life they live is by the faith of the Son of God; they live as becomes the members of His body." And

again : "Christian words will not make the Christian religion, there must be a Christian life."

Besides all these there were many others who deserve fuller mention if our space allowed ; as, for instance, Thomas Taylor, of Skipton, in Yorkshire, who had held a benefice as "lecturer" at Richmond, but gave it up for conscience' sake, trusting to the Lord to provide for himself, his wife and their family of five little children. He began preaching the day after he was convinced as "a tender spring of life sprang up in him." He had good service in Yorkshire and suffered many long years of imprisonment. His brother, Christopher, kept a boarding school for Friends' children in Waltham Abbey, Essex, and afterwards emigrated to Pennsylvania. Others were : Thomas Holme, the Kendal weaver, who became the apostle of Quakerism in South Wales ; George Whitehead, convinced, when a lad of fifteen, at Grayrigg, in Westmorland, who outlived almost all his contemporaries, and who, during his long life, proved himself a trusted leader and an indefatigable champion of Quakerism and of suffering Friends ; Ambrose Rigge, the schoolmaster, also from Grayrigg ; John Story and John Wilkinson, who, though later they became Separatists, had good service together for many years in the West ; Thomas Goodaire, who laboured mostly in the Midlands ; and Richard Hubberthorne—"dear, innocent Richard," as Fox called him, who was little in stature and slow of speech, but of sound judgment. Hubberthorne was thrown into Newgate in 1662 by Alderman Sir Richard Brown, and was one of the many who died in that fever-stricken place. Amongst the women were Mary Fisher, who travelled so extensively both in the East and West ; Dorothy Waugh and her sister Jane, who afterwards became Jane Whitehead ; "little" Elizabeth Fletcher and Elizabeth Leavens, afterwards wife of Thomas Holme. All of these and many others gathered in from among the "Seekers" during these fruitful months of Fox's ministry, became fearless Publishers of Truth and suffered bravely for their faith.

It is indeed difficult to over-estimate the importance to the Quaker movement of these accessions. Many of the new adherents were diligent Bible students, men of scholarly attainments, who had been carefully trained in religious knowledge

before they joined Friends. Not a few of them had been preachers amongst the Seekers. They were also most of them young men, in the full vigour of their intellectual and physical strength, and yet with a deep religious experience; for their earnest search after truth had taught them the emptiness of mere outward profession and they had found in Christ and in submission to His light and guidance the reality for which their souls had been seeking.

The fact that in many places whole communities of these Seekers threw in their lot with Friends also helped the movement in another way, because the meetings, which they had been accustomed to hold together, developed naturally and easily into Friends' meetings, and their existing organization—as, for instance, the General Meeting held at Preston Patrick once a month—provided a means by which the members could keep in touch with one another throughout a wide district. It was therefore easy for Fox, a few weeks later, to go from place to place "settling" meetings at Sedbergh, Preston Patrick, Kendal, Underbarrow, and soon afterwards at Grayrigg.

Westmorland was thus, from the very first, a strong centre of Quakerism, and we get a delightful glimpse of the warm fellowship which existed from this description of Howgill's:

"The Kingdom of Heaven did gather us, and catch us all, as in a net, and His Heavenly power at one time drew many hundreds to land . . . and the Lord appeared daily to us, to our astonishment, amazement and great admiration, insomuch that we often said one to another with great joy of heart: 'What? Is the Kingdom of God come to be with men? And will He take up His tabernacle among the sons of men, as He did of old?'"[1]

W. C. Braithwaite says in this connection: "The profound significance of these features of the situation will not be lost on the student of Quakerism. Had there been the same combination of intellect, heart, and youthful vigour at other epochs of Quaker history, the record would have been very different from what has been the case. It is, indeed, probable that at no other period did England provide in equal richness the mass of eager and spiritually minded seekers after truth that existed in those days of triumphant Puritanism. The Quaker

[1] *Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 94–95.

message appealed with greatly reduced force to the Laodicæan spirit of a later age, but, allowing for this, the failure to secure a succession of men with the fire and gifts and first-hand experience of these early pioneers was a chief reason for the gradual declension of power." [1]

[1] *Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 94–95.

SWARTHMORE HALL

The home of the Fells, who, with the Kirbys, were Lords of the Manor of Ulverston

(From a photograph by Albert G. Reckitt)

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CHAPTER VIII

SWARTHMORE HALL

1652—1654

"Swarthmore Hall became a centre to which Quaker preachers might return after long months of travel and hard usage, broken by frequent imprisonments. . . . Often, too, the consciousness of the life there must have helped them when cut off from the world in prison and far from outward fellowship. We may think of the little circle which met regularly at Swarthmore henceforth as the altar fire from which the light of the Quaker message was borne by many a brave preacher up and down the land; hither they could always return to kindle afresh another torch."—T. E. HARVEY, *The Rise of the Quakers*, pp. 49–50.

We left George Fox, at the end of our sixth chapter, about to pass into the remote district of Furness, where he was received by the rough country people with scant favour—a stranger being rare in those parts, and usually suspected as an alien, or, as they termed it, "an outcome." So when Fox spoke "the word of life" to the people at Stavely, a crowd, with the churchwarden at their head, dragged him out of the church, beat him and threw him headlong over a stone wall. One youth, however, John Braithwaite, who was making notes of the sermon, was convinced, and became a Quaker Publisher of Truth.

From Stavely, Fox passed on to Swarthmore Hall, an old Elizabethan manor-house, still standing, where lived Judge Thomas Fell with his wife Margaret, and their family of one son and six daughters (the youngest daughter, Rachel, was not born till 1653). Thomas Fell, besides being Judge of Assize of the Chester and North Wales Circuit, was Vice-Chancellor of the Duchy and Attorney for the County Palatine of Lancaster, and a member of the Long Parliament. His wife, who was sixteen years younger than her husband, belonged to an old county family, the Askews of Marsh Grange, and had been carefully educated, so that, although only eighteen when she

came as a bride to Swarthmore Hall, she filled her position there with dignity and grace. That was twenty years ago, and all that time she had been seeking after God, but though diligent in her attendance at the Ulverston church, and in going to hear the best ministers that came into Furness, she had never found that which her soul thirsted after.

From the beginning of their married life Judge Fell and his wife had kept open house at Swarthmore, especially welcoming there any ministers of religion who happened to be in their neighbourhood. Therefore, although the Judge was away on circuit and Mistress Fell herself not at home when he arrived, George Fox received a courteous welcome. When Margaret Fell returned that evening she was troubled to find that Fox did not agree with their minister, William Lampitt, whom she had always thought to be a very good man, but after talking for a while was satisfied that Fox was right. The next day she invited Fox to come with them to a lecture by Lampitt in the parish church at Ulverston, but he replied that he must do as the Lord directed. So she and her family went to church and Fox walked in the fields to commune with God. When he came into the church they were singing, and after they had done he asked leave to speak, which was granted him. Mounting a form, he began with the words: "He is not a Jew that is one outward, neither is that circumcision which is outward; but he is a Jew that is one inward, and that is circumcision which is of the heart." At first Margeret Fell stood up in her pew to catch every word, but as the preacher went on to make personal application of his theme, saying: "What had any to do with the Scriptures but as they came to the Spirit that gave them forth? You will say, Christ saith this, and the Apostles say this, but what canst thou say? Art thou a Child of Light, and hast thou walked in the Light, and what thou speakest is it inwardly from God?" she was so cut to the heart that she sat down again in her pew amongst her children and "cried bitterly," and she says: "I cried in my spirit to the Lord, 'We are all thieves, we are all thieves, we have taken the Scriptures in words and know nothing of them in ourselves.'"

Thus weeping, she heard little of what was passing around her until a Puritan magistrate, John Sawrey, called out: "Take him away," when she from her place replied in a gentle but firm

voice: "Let him alone, why may not he speak as well as any other."

That night Fox had a meeting at Swarthmore Hall with the family and servants, and they were all impressed and afterward convinced—Margaret Fell and her daughters, Thomas Salthouse and Ann Clayton (who became Publishers of Truth), Mary Askew, and young William Caton, who was then living at the Hall as companion to the son, George Fell, and several others. As for Margaret Fell, she tells us: "I was stricken into such a sadness, I knew not what to do, my husband being from home. I saw it was the truth, and I could not deny it; and I did as the Apostle saith: 'I received truth in the love of it.'"

About three weeks later Judge Fell returned from circuit, and as he came home across the dangerous sands which formed the only approach from Lancaster, Priest Lampitt, with a great party of captains and great ones of the country, rode out to meet him, and informed him "that a great disaster had befallen his family, for the Quakers had bewitched them all and taken them out of their religion, and that he must either send the Quakers away, or all the country would be undone."

"So," says Margaret Fell, "my husband came home, greatly offended; and any may think what a condition I was like to be in, that either I must displease my husband or offend God; for he was very much troubled with us all in the house and family, they had so prepossessed him against us. But James Nayler and Richard Farnsworth were both then at our house and I desired them both to come and speak to him, and so they did very moderately and wisely. . . . And after that he had heard them speak awhile, he was better satisfied. . . . And then he was pretty moderate and quiet, and his dinner being ready he went to it, and I went in and sate me down by him. And whilst I was sitting, the power of the Lord seized upon me, and he was stricken with amazement, and knew not what to think, but was quiet and still. And the children were all quiet and still, and grown sober, and could not play on their musick that they were learning; and all these things made him quiet and still.

"At night George Fox came; and after supper my husband was sitting in the parlour, and I asked him if George Fox

might come in. And he said: 'Yes.' So George came in without any compliment, and walked into the room, and began to speak presently; and the family and James Nayler and Richard Farnsworth all came in; and he spoke very excellently as ever I heard him . . . that if all England had been there I thought they could not have denied the truth of those things. And so my husband came to see clearly the truth of what he spoke, and was very quiet that night, said no more and went to bed." George Fox records this interview in his Journal as follows: "I found the priests and professors and that envious Justice Sawrey had much incensed Judge Fell against the truth by their lies, but when I came to speak with him I answered all his objections, and so throughly satisfied him by the Scriptures that he was convinced in his judgment . . . and came to see, by the openings of the spirit of God in his heart, over all the priests and teachers of the world, and did not go to hear them for some years before he died; for he knew it was the Truth that I declared and that Christ was the Teacher of His people and their Saviour."

The next morning, when some Friends were talking together at Swarthmore Hall about the numbers who had been convinced in that neighbourhood and the difficulty of finding a meeting place, Judge Fell overheard them and said of his own accord: "You may meet here if you will." "Then," says Margaret Fell, "notice was given that day and the next to Friends, and there was a good large meeting the first-day, which was the first meeting that was at Swarthmore, and so continued there a meeting from 1652 till 1690" (when the present meeting-house, given by George Fox, was built). "And my husband went that day to the steeple-house, and none with him but his clerk and his groom that rid with him; and the priest and the people were all fearfully troubled; but, praised be the Lord, they never got their wills upon us to this day."

The meetings were held in the large dining hall, off which opened the little room where the judge transacted his legal business, and here, we are told, he would often sit to hear the Quakers preaching, and join unseen in their worship. Overhead is the guest chamber, with a window, once a door, from which tradition says that Fox would sometimes preach when the congregation was too large for the dining-hall.

Judge Fell never joined Friends, but henceforth they could always count on his sympathy, and his influential position often enabled him to shield them from persecution. Probably the same broadmindedness which had caused him to throw open his home to good men of all creeds and had enabled him to appreciate the spirituality of the Quaker teaching, also kept him in unity with true-hearted men of other denominations, and he did not wish to be bound to any one fellowship. His influence in the countryside was much stronger, and he was probably able to serve Friends better as an outsider than if he had actually joined their number. As long as he lived, i.e. until 1658, his wife was free from open persecution, and he allowed her to use their home, as she loved to do, as a resting-place and meeting-ground for Friends from all parts of England.

Swarthmore Hall became, indeed, a most important centre of the Quaker movement. Thanks to the protection of Judge Fell's name, the company who gathered there were singularly free from disturbance or persecution. By the year 1653, no fewer than thirty travelling preachers had joined the Quaker movement, and by 1654 their number had increased to sixty. For all these "Publishers of Truth" Swarthmore Hall was not only a place of rest and refreshment, where they were always sure of a welcome after arduous travel or imprisonment, but it was also a centre of organization, where plans for work were discussed and whence the pioneers were sent forth two and two on their mission. Margaret Fell, as mistress of this home, held a place of unique service. Thomas Camm describes her as having been "a tender nursing mother unto many." Her family duties prevented her for many years from sharing actively in the work of "spreading Truth," but her home itself was one of the "altar fires" of Quakerism, and her influence extended far beyond, for she made it her business to keep in touch with the leaders of the movement by personal correspondence and sympathetic help. She also took a leading part in the establishment and administration of a fund collected at Kendal "for the service of Truth," the accounts of which, beginning with June 1, 1654, are still preserved. During the first few months the only receipts came from the Westmorland Seekers and from Margaret Fell herself, but afterwards she appealed to Friends in Lancashire and Cumberland for help,

"that there may be some money in a stock for disbursing . . . either to Friends that go forth into the service, or to prisoners' necessity . . . to be disbursed according as the Lord requires." Other similar funds were started later on in Yorkshire and Bishopric (i.e. Durham), in London and other places, but the first realization of the need arose from the sympathetic heart and the sound common sense and good business capacity of Margaret Fell, and to the end of her life she retained a warm interest in these collections and their wise distribution. These collections were made at first by individuals, afterwards by representatives of districts, and finally by a meeting representative of the whole country. The contributions were liberal and show us clearly that, although the early Friends testified against a hireling ministry, they believed in supporting those who felt called to preach the Gospel and had not means of their own for travelling and other necessary expenses.

As they grew older, Margaret Fell's daughters were her willing helpers, both in the oversight of household provision necessary for the entertainment of so many guests, and also in the correspondence and account-keeping which formed such an important part of her work.

She had an able helper, too, in William Caton, the young lad of sixteen who was being educated with her son George, and who was "convinced" with the rest of the Swarthmore household. He tells us in his *Journal* how much he owed to Margaret Fell's loving care, and when the two young men were about to be sent to college together, William was so troubled at the thought of the separation that he was allowed to remain at Swarthmore as secretary to Margaret Fell and tutor to the younger children. Two years later he felt himself called to preach the Gospel, first in England, and afterwards in Holland where he did valuable pioneer work, visiting it several times and at last dying there in 1665, worn out at the age of twenty-seven by his incessant travels and sufferings. He always regarded Swarthmore Hall as his English home, and looked back to the years he had spent there as to an oasis of heavenly light and love.

His help as secretary must have been of real value to the busy mother, who was also mother to the whole Church. Although very few letters have been preserved in her own hand-

writing, we can judge a little of the number she must have written from the collection of "Swarthmore Papers" at Devonshire House, which forms the chief documentary source for early Quaker history, and which includes many hundreds of letters from and to Margaret Fell from Friends all over the world.

Besides all this correspondence Margaret Fell was quite an authoress. In 1656–7 she published three works, two of them addressed to the Jews, for whom she seems to have felt a very special concern. One of these books is called: *A loving Salutation to the Seed of Abraham among the Jews, wherever they are scattered up and down on the face of the Earth.* This was translated into Hebrew by her friend, John Stubbs, and widely circulated.

Judge Fell's death in 1658 left his widow unprotected, with her large family, and she suffered much from the avarice and cruelty of the persecutors. Her daughters, the eldest of whom was twenty-five and the youngest five years old, were all very loving and devoted to her, but her son George, though now twenty-two, was no help or comfort. He had never joined Friends and lived mostly in London, where he was studying law and had chambers in the Temple, and as he had ceased to have any sympathy with Friends, he regarded his mother's connection with them as a misfortune and disgrace, and later on she suffered much from his unfilial conduct.

But we must return to George Fox's visit to Swarthmore in July 1652. During the summer he travelled in Westmorland and other parts of the North, and in September, returning to Swarthmore, found the Furness people very bitter against him. He was mobbed in Ulverston church, when trying to speak, and Justice Sawrey, "the first stirrer up of cruel persecution in the North," handed him over to the constables to be whipped and turned out of the town. As they dragged him along, they beat and shook him, and knocked down and beat also many friendly people who were with him. Even young George Fell, who was running after Fox to see what would happen, they threw into a ditch of water and cried out: "Knock the teeth out of his head." As soon as they were well outside the town, the constables left him to the rude multitude, who beat him with hedge stakes and holly bushes till he

fell senseless on the common. He stood up again "in the strengthening power of the Eternal God," and, stretching out his arms, bid them strike again. A mason thereupon struck him such a blow with his walking rule staff that his hand was numbed, and the people cried: "He hath spoiled his hand for ever." "But," says Fox, "I looked at it in the love of God (for I was in the love of God to them all that had persecuted me), and after a while the Lord's power sprang through me again and through my hand and arm, so that, in a moment, I recovered strength in my hand and arm in the sight of them all."

This miracle, as it seemed to the mob, overawed them for a moment, and some came and offered to see him safe home if he would give them money. Fox firmly declined, but "was moved of the Lord to declare to them all the way of life," and how "they were more like heathens and Jews than true Christians." Thus speaking he walked boldly back right into the middle of Ulverston market-place. Here he met a soldier, who said: "Sir, I see you are a man, and I am ashamed and grieved that you should be thus abused." Fox replied that the Lord's power was over all, and with that he turned again and crossed the crowded market-place on his way to leave the town. His unknown defender followed him, but seeing that the mob, as soon as Fox had left, had fallen upon the other "friendly people," he turned back and, drawing his naked rapier, ran in among them. Fox turned too and, catching hold of his hand with the rapier in it, bid him put up his sword if he would come with him. A few days later this kind-hearted soldier had to pay for his chivalry. Seven men all at once fell upon him and beat him cruelly for having taken the Quakers' part. "For," says the *Journal*, "it was the manner of the persecutors of that country for twenty or forty people to run upon one man. And they fell so upon Friends in many places that they could hardly pass the high ways, stoning, beating and breaking their heads."[1]

George Fox now returned to Swarthmore, and found all busy "dressing the heads and hands of Friends and friendly people, which had been broken or hurt that day by the professors and hearers of Lampitt, the priest." Here his friends urged Fox to stay for a time until the popular fury against him had

[1] *Journal*, 1st edn., p. 86.

abated, but he could not be inactive long and soon set off again, accompanied by James Nayler, to visit a recent convert, James Lancaster, at his home on Walney Island. On the way, as they were holding a meeting with the inhabitants of Cockan, a man appeared at a window, threatening the audience with a cocked pistol. The people all ran, but the man called to Fox to come out and meet him, for it was only he whom he wanted. So Fox went out, whereupon the man snapped his pistol at him, but it refused to go off, and he was soon disarmed by the rest. Arrived at Walney Island, about forty men with staves, clubs, and fishing poles fell upon them and thrust them back into the sea, so that Fox was knocked down and "mazed." Looking up at last he saw James Lancaster's wife throwing stones at him whilst her husband was defending him with his own body by lying on the top of him, for she was persuaded that Fox had bewitched her husband and she meant to stone him to death. However, "in the power of God over them all," he got up, and James Lancaster set him over the water. Here again the townsmen rose up with pitchforks, flails and staves, crying: "Kill him, knock him on the head, bring the cart and carry him away to the churchyard," till at last they left him, and he found a ditch of water where he could wash himself. Then followed a weary walk of three miles to Thomas Hutton's, the nearest friendly house, where he went to bed so weak with bruises that he could hardly turn. The next day his Swarthmore friends, hearing what had happened, sent a horse to bring him there, and he rode back with great difficulty, so bruised and sore that every little jolt caused "much pain."

Even at Swarthmore it seemed at first that he was not to be safe, for the constables were sent to serve a warrant for his arrest on a charge of blasphemy, and he would doubtless have been imprisoned again had not Judge Fell returned home in the very nick of time, and sent the constables off with a sharp reprimand and orders to arrest instead the ringleaders of those who had assaulted his guest!

During 1653 the work in the North was continued by Fox, Dewsbury and others, and in spite of violent opposition from the ministers and magistrates, the people crowded to hear the preachers.

In Cumberland they threatened that if Fox came there

again they would take his life. "When I heard it," he says, "I was drawn to go into Cumberland again, and went to one Miles Wennington's, in the same parish from which those threatenings came, but they had not power to touch me then." The record which follows tells of the wonderful way in which God's power accompanied his preaching, convincing the hearers (often "many hundreds" at one meeting), and preserving and strengthening him through innumerable dangers. Several times his life was in peril through violence, and when he was thrown into Carlisle prison a determined effort was made to have him hanged. When this design was defeated, an order was given to put him "down into the dungeon amongst the moss-troopers, thieves and murderers," "a filthy nasty place," where nevertheless, he tells us: "The prisoners were all made very loving and subject to me and some of them were convinced of the Truth."

The jailer was very cruel, and beat Friends with a cudgel if they only came to look at him through the window. One day, Fox tells us, "while he struck me, I was made to sing in the Lord's power, and that made him rage the more. Then he went and fetched a fiddler, and brought him in where I was, and set him to play, thinking to vex me thereby. But while he played, I was moved in the everlasting power of the Lord God to sing, and my voice drowned the noise of the fiddle, and struck and confounded them, and made them give over fiddling and go their ways."

It was whilst he was in this dungeon that James Parnell, then "a little lad of about sixteen," came to see him and was convinced.

The following extract from the *Journal*, towards the close of 1653, gives us an idea of the extent and results of this work:

"The next day we came through the country into Cumberland again, where we had a general meeting of many thousands of people atop of an hill near Langlands. A glorious and heavenly meeting it was, for the glory of the Lord did shine over all; and there were as many as one could well speak over, the multitude was so great. Their eyes were fixed on Christ, their Teacher, and they came to sit under their own vine, insomuch that Francis Howgill, coming afterwards to visit them, found they had no need of words, for they were sitting under

their Teacher, Christ Jesus. In the sense whereof he sate down amongst them without speaking any thing. A great convincement there was in Cumberland, Bishoprick [i.e. Durham], Northumberland, Westmorland, Lancashire and Yorkshire, and the plants of God grew and flourished so, the heavenly rain descending and God's glory shining upon them, that many mouths were opened by the Lord to His praise, yea, to babes and sucklings He ordained strength." [1]

Quakerism was, in fact, rapidly spreading in the North of England. The balance of power during these early years of the Commonwealth period rested with men of advanced religious views, who were distrustful alike of Royalists and Presbyterians, and inclined to favour the Quakers, whose opposition to a State ministry agreed with their own ideas.

In Cheshire and the borders of Wales work had also already begun. In July 1653, Morgan Lloyd, Independent Minister of Wrexham, who was himself something of a mystic and in sympathy with many of the views of Friends, sent two of his congregation into the North to make inquiries about the Quakers, and one of them, John ap John, eagerly accepted the new teaching. A little later Richard Hubberthorne and another Friend visited Wrexham, but seem to have behaved with more zeal than charity, and to have condemned the worship and congregation without appreciating Morgan Lloyd's own open-mindedness and freedom from convention. Carried out in this judging spirit, their visit was productive of little good; but in Cheshire they succeeded better, and the beginnings of meetings were gathered at Malpas, Congleton and Mobberley (afterwards Morley) chiefly from congregations of Seekers.

These Cheshire visits were conducted with much spiritual fervour, and many manifestations of what was called "the power," which alarmed the authorities. Thomas Holme, for instance, who was thrown into prison, lay on the floor, having been commanded by the Lord "to deny his bed." At midnight the power of the Lord came upon him, compelling him to sing. He writes to Margaret Fell: "And the power was so great it made all my fellow-prisoners amazed, and some were shaken, for the power was exceeding great, and I scarcely know whether I was in the body, yea or no, and there appeared

[1] *Journal*, 1st edn., p. 120.

light in the prison and astonished me, and I was afraid, and trembled at the appearance of the light, my legs shake[d] under me; and my fellow-prisoners beheld the light and wondered, and the light was so glorious it dazzled my eyes."

Together with frequent manifestations of the "power," we find that the spiritual enthusiasm of the early Friends led them sometimes into extravagances which appear to us to-day to have been the result of emotional impulses uncontrolled by sound judgment. "Going naked as a sign" was a not uncommon practice, and seems to have been approved when undertaken by any under a strong sense of duty and "contrary to their own wills." The high doctrine of spiritual guidance held by the early Friends prevented them from realizing that the many imperfections of our human personality will intrude themselves even in moments of deepest devotion, and accordingly they countenanced many things which we feel to have been errors of judgment.

The idea of testifying by signs was taken from the Hebrew prophets, and was an attempt to declare the "Day of the Lord" to all sorts and conditions of men, even those who would not listen to a verbal message. A typical instance is that of Richard Sale, a constable, convinced in 1654, who went through Chester streets "as a sign," barefoot and barelegged, dressed in sackcloth with ashes on his head, sweet flowers in his right hand and stinking weeds in his left. We are told that the people were struck into astonishment, though some set their dogs on him. A year or two later he went through Eastgate Street at midday with a lighted candle in his hand to show the uselessness of candlelight worship. He suffered bravely for his faith, being thrown into Northgate Prison, where he was put for three, four, five, and even eight hours together into a hole in the rock called Little Ease, so small that, being a stout man, it took four men to squeeze him into it and caused him many bruises and much loss of blood. These barbarities so weakened his health that after languishing about two months he died in August 1657.

Of another Friend, William Simpson, of Lancashire, George Fox tells us: "He went three years naked and in sackcloth in the days of Oliver and his Parliament as a sign to them and to the priests shewing how God would strip them of their power,

and that they should be as naked as he was, and should be stripped of their benefices. All which came to pass after King Charles the Second came in. And, moreover, he was made oftentimes to colour his face black, and so black they should be and appear so to people for all their great profession. . . . And the Mayor of Cambridge put his gown about him, being sensible there was somthing in the thing. And he was made to go through London naked, and he was obedient unto the heavenly command, and often ventured his life and it was given up: who many times did receive many stripes upon his naked body with thorn bushes, so that, when his service was done, Friends were forst to pluck the thorns out of his flesh; but he was carried over all by the mighty power of God." [1]

Whilst all this seems strange and incomprehensible to us, we cannot but admire the faithfulness and courage of these early Friends in the performance of what to them was a difficult duty, and we must recognize that their conduct was not so unnatural under the conditions of thought of the time as it appears to us now.

Happily, however, the vital message of Quakerism was expressed not only by prophetic signs or even by fervent preaching, but also by the most convincing of all witnesses, the *lives* of its followers. As George Fox records in his *Journal*:

"At the first convincement, when Friends could not put off their hats to people, nor say you to a particular, but thee and thou; and could not bow, nor use the world's salutations, nor fashions, nor customs—and many Friends being tradesmen of several sorts—they lost their custom at the first, for the people would not trade with them nor trust them. And for a time people that were tradesmen could hardly get money enough to buy bread, but afterwards, when people came to see Friends' honesty and truthfulness and yea and nay at a word in their dealings, and their lives and conversations did preach and reach to the witness of God in all people, and they knew and saw that they would not cozen and cheat them for conscience' sake toward God, and that at last they might send any child and be as well used as themselves at any of their shops, so then the things altered so that all the inquiry was where was a draper or shopkeeper or tailor or shoemaker or any other tradesman that was

[1] *The First Publishers of Truth*, pp. 365–366.

a Quaker: then that was all the cry, insomuch that Friends had double the trade beyond any of their neighbours: and if there was any trading they had it, insomuch that then the cry was of all the professors and others, If we let these people alone they will take the trading of the nation out of our hands. . . . And this was from the years 1652 to 1656, and since." [1]

By the year 1654, therefore, we may consider the Society of the "Friends of Truth" fairly established. The oldest Meetings were in the Northern Midlands, where Mansfield and Skegby were the chief centres. A beginning had also been made in Cheshire and North Wales; but the strength of the movement lay in the six Northern Counties, where the message of Fox had been received by whole communities of Seekers, who were now eager in their turn to hand it on to others. This is strikingly illustrated by the map of "Quakerism in England and Wales at the beginning of 1654" in W. C. Braithwaite's *Beginnings of Quakerism*. This map shows seventy-six "settled" Meetings in the six Northern Counties, fourteen in the Northern Midlands, and none at all in the rest of the country. We find also that the various Quaker communities were already agreed on many points of practice, and had established an elementary Church organization and discipline. Several "monthly" and some "general" Meetings had been "set up" with simple rules for dealing with those who "walked disorderly," and Fox had started a system of registration for recording births, marriages and deaths. We have seen also how arrangements had been made for meeting the necessities of travelling ministers, prisoners and the poor.

But underlying all these external arrangements, and more important than them all, was the spirit of deep fellowship which was characteristic of early Quakerism. Fox and his followers had no thought in the beginning of founding a new sect. Fox addresses himself in 1653 "to all that would know the way to the Kingdom, whether they be in forms, without forms or got above all forms." The Quaker message was universal, and the names by which the early Friends described themselves, such as "Children of the Light," "Friends of Truth," or "Friends," belonged equally to all disciples who had a living experience of Christ, and were not regarded as sect names. The

[1] Camb. *Journal*, I., p. 138.

experience of the indwelling light of Christ which they shared together gave them indeed a new ground of fellowship which knit them together in a unity of spirit unknown to those around them.

Their belief in the universality of their message explains their untiring zeal and unsparing aggressiveness, and also their wonderful success. They felt that they *must* give expression to the truths they had discovered, and they had the courage and the consistency to apply them to their everyday lives. To many the new truths were so pre-eminently the thing worth living for that they left their outward callings and formed themselves into what they regarded as a "camp of the Lord" for the purpose of "publishing Truth" abroad. Fox says that by the spring of 1654 "a matter of seventy ministers did the Lord raise up and send abroad out of the North countries," and since, as we have seen, all these looked to Swarthmore Hall and their meetings there for much of the guidance and inspiration of their work, we may fitly close this chapter with an account given by William Caton of the warm fellowship which existed there and which was typical of the Quaker fellowship everywhere in these days of early fervour: "Oh! the love which in that day abounded among us, especially in that family [at Swarthmore], and oh! the freshness of the power of the Lord God which then was amongst us, and the zeal for God and His truth, the comfort and refreshment which we had from His presence, the nearness and dearness that was amongst us one towards another, the sights, openings, and revelations which we then had. . . . And hence came that worthy family to be so renowned in the nation, the fame of which spread much among Friends, and the power and presence of the Lord being so much there with us, it was as a means to induce many even from far to come thither, so that at one time there would have been Friends out of five or six counties." [1]

[1] *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 98. Quoted from William Caton's *Life*, 1689 edn., chap. iii.

CHAPTER IX

SPREAD OF QUAKERISM THROUGHOUT THE NATION

1654—1660

"Dear Friends and Lambs, put on the armour of light and the shield of truth, and the breastplate of righteousness that ye may stand in battle against all the Philistians . . . being led and guided with the Spirit up to God . . . that what ye do beget may be to Him, and into His image, and that which ye do present it may be perfect. . . . Stir abroad whilst the door is open and the light shineth. . . . In the life of God wait . . . that ye may beget to God, that as good plowmen and good thresher-men ye may be, to bring out the wheat."—Fox, *Epistles*, No. 135, to Howgill and Burrough, about 1657.

Quakerism having thus become firmly established in the North of England, the leaders were now eager to carry the message to others parts of the nation.

In following the story of their mission it is important to remember the difference between the England of that day and of our own times, not only in population, but also in the relative importance of North and South, town and country. In 1654, out of a total population of about five millions, it is estimated that less than one-seventh (i.e. about 700,000) belonged to the counties north of the Humber; *now*, out of a population of forty millions, one-fourth, or about ten millions come from these counties. The North was then in its infancy as a manufacturing district, and is described by Traill as the wildest part of the country.

Then again, two-thirds of the population is now urban; in 1654 at least two-thirds was rural, and there were very few large towns. London, with a population of half a million, and Bristol and Norwich with about 30,000 each, were the three largest cities; Bristol being the chief seaport and Norwich the largest manufacturing town. There was good strategy in the instinct which led the Publishers of Truth to make these three cities the

main centres of their service—indeed many of the expressions they use show us clearly that they regarded their mission as a warfare against the powers of evil. As already stated, they had formed a "camp of the Lord" in the North. Burrough writes of setting out with Howgill "to conquer London," and later on they stayed in that city "to maintain the war."

George Fox says of the early summer of 1654: "And so when the Churches was settled in the North and the Lord had raised up many and sent forth many into His vineyard to preach His everlasting Gospel, as F[rancis] H[owgill] and Edward Burrough to London, John Camm and John Audland to Bristol through the Countries, Richard Hubberthorne and George Whitehead towards Norwich, and Thomas Holme into Wales, that a matter of seventy ministers did the Lord raise up and sent abroad out of the North Countries."

In London, Amor Stoddart and a few others were already convinced, and when Gervase Benson visited the city in November 1653, he wrote: "There are many hereaways inquiring after Friends." A few months later Camm and Howgill travelled up from Westmorland on foot under a "concern" to declare the word of the Lord to Oliver Cromwell. They found him "too wise in comprehension and too high in notion to receive Truth in plainness and demonstration of the Spirit," but they go on to say: "There is some that is convinced of the truth, some few simple hearts, and for their sakes we shall stay some few days." Meetings were being held at Simon Dring's house in Watling Street and at Robert Dring's in Moorfields, but the little company were looking eagerly for help from Friends in the North, and in June they wrote a letter saying that they felt themselves to be but children, and their words but stammerings, and at the same time they realized that all around them was a great harvest, waiting to be gathered, if there were but the labourers to do it.

Before this letter was received the messengers were on their way. Howgill and Burrough reached London early in July 1654, and were lodged by Robert Dring, who was a linen-draper by trade. Their method of working was to declare their message in meetings of Seekers, Independents, or Anabaptists, and afterwards to appoint meetings of their own.

They found the city full of pious persons, who spent their time in discussing religious questions without having any experi-

mental knowledge of that of which they spoke. Many of these were curious to see and hear "the plain north-country plowmen," who, they had heard, "did differ in judgment to all other people in that city." Howgill writes on August 1st: "By the arm of the Lord all falls before us, according to the word of the Lord before I came to this city, that all should be as a plain. . . . We were made in much power to speak, and our words clave the rocks, that many cried, and some were taken in the power to the great astonishment of the rest."

One Sunday, Howgill was moved to go to a meeting of Seekers, where he spoke above an hour and many were convinced. Thence he returned to a great meeting which Burrough was holding, where the mighty power of God was manifested and many hundreds were convinced. Their chief difficulty was to separate the "convinced" persons from the crowds who came to listen and amongst whom they "threshed" diligently and with wonderful results. The directness and simplicity of their message was in refreshing contrast with the usual style of preaching, and as their words came from a living experience so they reached the consciences of their hearers. We hear of three or more large meetings every week, of strong "fightings" with the religious societies of the day, of visits to churches for "declaring Truth," and of incessant labours amongst the crowds who flocked to hear them.

In March 1655, George Fox was sent as a prisoner to London, on suspicion of plotting against the Government. He wrote a paper to the Protector, to clear himself, and afterwards was summoned to a private interview at Whitehall. He tells us that Cromwell carried himself very moderately and, at parting, caught him by the hand and with tears in his eyes said: "Come again to my house, for if thou and I were but an hour in a day together, we should be nearer one to the other." W. C. Braithwaite says: "The interview served to clear Friends from several of the wild rumours current about them, and Fox was able to satisfy Cromwell in the matter of plots. But the uncompromising sincerity of the Quakers and their militant attitude towards the dominant Puritan sects made them a strangely disturbing element in the Commonwealth, and it is not surprising that the authorities looked on them with disfavour. Circumstances were forcing Cromwell to govern England more and more by absolute rule, and disturbances of all kinds must be repressed. He was a sincere

upholder of religious liberty, but the unsettlement of the nation compelled him to insist that it should be a liberty within the limits of good order. Three weeks prior to the interview with Fox a proclamation had appeared, which Gardiner calls 'the charter of religious freedom under the Protectorate.' The large and sincere phrasing of the opening sentences justifies this title, but the gist of the document is in the later part, which laments the rude and unchristian disturbance of ministers, practised, contrary to just liberty, by divers men lately risen up under the names of Quakers, Ranters and others. The proclamation strictly requires 'that they forbear henceforth all such irregular and disorderly practices; and if, in contempt hereof, any persons shall presume to offend as aforesaid, we shall esteem them disturbers of the civil peace, and shall expect and do require all officers and ministers of justice to proceed against them accordingly.'" [1]

This proclamation was a strong incentive to persecution, and although it was unjust to couple Quakers with Ranters, the public did not recognize the distinction, and thought that the high claim made by Friends to spiritual light and guidance amounted to a claim to live without any law but their own wills.

When Fox was set at liberty he was an object of great curiosity in the town because of the reports which had spread about his piercing eyes, his leathern breeches and his long hair, and especially, because "Oliver's Newsmonger" had put in his "news-book" that he wore silver buttons, and bewitched people and made them follow him by hanging ribbons on their arms! Nevertheless, he had "great and powerful meetings; so great," he says, "were the throngs of people, that I could hardly get to and from the meetings for the crowds of people, and the truth spread exceedingly. . . . A great convincement there was in London and some in the Protector's house and family."

It was about this time that the large premises at the Bull and Mouth were taken by Friends "to have some settled meetings for the sake of those who yet sat in darkness, that they might come and hear the truth declared and be turned to the Lord." Burrough and Howgill, in March 1655, give the following account in a letter to Margaret Fell of their usual work on a Sunday: "We get Friends on the first-days to meet together in several places out of the rude multitude . . . and we two go to the great meeting-place

[1] *Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 180–181.

which we have, which will hold a thousand people, which is always nearly filled, to thresh among the world; and we stay till twelve or one o'clock, and then pass away, the one to one place and the other to another place where Friends are met in private; and stay till four or five o'clock." They also mention George Fox's presence at the Bull and Mouth meetings, where they say that his voice and his outward man were almost spent amongst the crowd.

During the next month we hear of *two* "great places for a threshing-floor," besides five or six meetings every first-day for Friends, also a meeting set up a little beyond Whitehall, near Westminster.

For much of our information about this period we are indebted to letters written to Margaret Fell, and these show that a close touch was being maintained between London and the scattered Publishers of Truth in the South of England. John Wilkinson and John Story are, we learn, in Wiltshire. Fresh workers are constantly coming forward from the North and fresh fields of service opening before them. John Stubbs and William Caton go towards Dover, Richard Clayton and Thomas Bond towards Norwich and into Suffolk, Miles Halhead and Thomas Salthouse towards Plymouth, John Slee and Thomas Lawson into Sussex, Thomas Robertson and Ambrose Rigge into Surrey and Kent, James Lancaster and Thomas Stubbs into Bedfordshire. As these Friends passed through London, Howgill and Burrough supplied their needs; Howgill writes in April 1655: "I shall take care for the supplyment of Friends in these parts while I am here, and truly I fear lest the burden should be heavy upon the North, for the charge is great and our camp great." In reply to this, six pounds was sent from the Kendal fund, draining it dry for the time.

It is impossible here to follow the footsteps of all the "Publishers of Truth." We will take only a few typical examples. John Stubbs, an old Commonwealth soldier, and young William Caton travelled into Kent and had good service at Dover, Folkestone and other places, but at Maidstone the law against vagrants was put in force against them with great severity. The authorities "searched them narrowly, and took away their money, Bibles, gloves, knives, inkhorns and paper . . . and had them into a room where they were stripped naked and their necks and arms put in the stocks; and there cruelly whipped with cords in a bloody manner in the sight of many people, which forced tears

from the tender-hearted that were there, to see the execution done. And when they had thus cruelly proceeded, they fastened irons upon them with great clogs of wood, and put them in amongst transgressors."

After a few days they were sent off home under the Vagrancy Act, being passed from one constable to another. As often happened, however, the constables grew tired of their charge and left their prisoners to themselves. So the two Friends returned to Maidstone, testified in the church and went away unharmed for "God chained down the red dragon" of persecution at that time. They went also to Canterbury and Sandwich and several meetings were settled in Kent as a result of this visit, "and all was as a green field of corn growing up."

Richard Hubberthorne and George Whitehead had, we shall remember, set out for Norwich and the Eastern Counties, and this stronghold of Puritanism proved but stony ground for the Quaker message. Hubberthorne was made a prisoner before he reached Norwich, and Whitehead a few weeks after his entry into the city; two other Friends from the North arriving in November were at once imprisoned as disturbers of the peace, because they could show no cause for coming except to declare the Truth. Others who followed shared the same fate. The authorities were evidently determined to stifle the new movement. Hubberthorne writes to Fox: "I am called to [be] amongst a people where the gospel hath not been preached nor no man hath laid a foundation to build upon, but are all aliens and strangers to the love of God." He calls the townsfolk "the most wrangling, mischievous, envious, malicious people that ever I came amongst," and young Whitehead was evidently of the same opinion, for having on one occasion been mobbed and thrown into prison for speaking after a sermon, he regarded it as a merciful rescue, for he says: "In those days prisons and gaols were made sanctuaries and places of refuge and safety to us from the fury of the tumultuous mob."

A few in the city were, however, convinced, and by May 1655 there were meetings at six or seven places in the district besides Norwich. In Suffolk, Whitehead found a congregation of Seekers who met together with preachers of their own, and as in other places formed a ready-made nucleus for a Friends' Meeting. By this time most of the Norwich prisoners had been released and Howgill, Burrough and Fox had paid short visits to strengthen

the work. George Fox, the Younger (that is younger in date of convincement), and George Rofe, a glazier of Halstead, were two fruits of this mission. Both were imprisoned very speedily, but during their imprisonment developed valuable gifts as ministers.

Suffolk and Essex now replaced Norfolk as centres of persecution and Friends were kept prisoners and maltreated on the slightest pretexts until October 1656, when Cromwell sent a special order for their release. The most touching case of suffering is that of James Parnell, a well-educated lad from Retford, "trained up in the schools of literature," small in stature, but of high zeal and courage. When about fifteen he tells us that, through the workings of God's spirit in his heart, he had turned from the world and left off attending church. His relations disowned him and he longed to meet with a people with whom he might have union. Near his home he found such a company "whom the Lord was a-gathering out of the dark world, to sit down together and wait upon His name." A little later, in 1654, probably on the advice of his new friends, he travelled North to visit Fox, who was then in Carlisle Gaol; this visit confirmed his faith and thenceforth he definitely threw in his lot with Friends. Although so young, he felt called at once to public witness for the Truth and joined Richard Hubberthorne and George Whitehead in their work in the Eastern Counties. Here for about a year he worked incessantly disputing with the scholars of Cambridge University, and not fearing, wherever he came, to call the people to repentance. In the Isle of Ely, "that land of errors and sectaries," he had great meetings, carried on "in much power . . . to the binding and chaining of the heathen and the reaching of the witness, so that many was convinced." Several times he was beaten or thrown into prison, but his courage never faltered.

He now turned to Essex, which had not yet been visited by the Quaker messengers, and after visiting Halstead, Coggeshall and other places, came to Colchester, which had become an important manufacturing town, through the immigration of Dutch refugees. Here he stayed at the house of Thomas Shortland, a weaver, who, with his wife Ann, had a short time before been convinced by his ministry. Ten days' strenuous work resulted in a number of convincements, amongst others that of Steven Crisp, who afterwards became one of the most eminent of Quaker preachers. George Fox says of Parnell: "Many hundreds of persons

were convinced by the words and labours of this young minister." His own record of a day's work at Colchester gives us some idea of his remarkable energy. In the morning he says that he received at his lodgings any who wished to ask him questions, then he went to the church and after the sermon was over, spoke to the large congregation there. In the afternoon "he addressed a very great meeting of about a thousand people, in John Furly's yard, he being mounted above the crowd and speaking out of a hay-chamber window." Still later that same day, he not only disputed with the town lecturer and a Baptist preacher, but also spoke at a previously advertised meeting for the children of the French and Flemish weaver-refugees. One day, as he came out of St. Nicholas' church, a man struck him with a great staff saying: "Take that for Jesus Christ's sake," to which he meekly replied: "Friend, I do receive it for Jesus Christ's sake."

In July 1655, hearing that a meeting had been specially called at Coggeshall to fast and pray against the errors of the Quakers, Parnell attended it. Feeling ran high and the preacher "cried out fiercely against the Quakers as deceivers." When Parnell tried to answer him he was not allowed to speak, and, as he was leaving, was arrested and sent to Colchester Gaol, where none of his friends were allowed to visit him. When the Assizes came round he was fastened to a chain with several felons and murderers and led about eighteen miles to Chelmsford, remaining chained both day and night. The accusation against him was that he had caused a riot; but nothing could be proved and, although threatened by the judge, the jury refused to convict him. The judge thereupon took the matter into his own hands and fined him £40 "for contempt of the magistracy and ministry," sending him back to prison until the fine should be paid. The prison at Colchester was an old ruinous castle, said to have been built in the time of the Romans, and the jailor was commanded not to let any "Giddy-headed people" (meaning Friends) come near him. He was only too willing to comply with this order, for both he and his wife were very cruel and often beat James Parnell. They allowed the other prisoners to steal his food and would not let him use a trundle bed which his friends brought him, but forced him to lie on the cold damp stones. "Afterwards," says Sewel, "he was put into the Hole in the Wall, a room much like to a baker's oven, for the walls of that building, which is indeed a direful nest, are of an

excessive thickness, as I have seen myself. . . . Being confined in the said hole, which was, as I remember, about twelve foot high from the ground, and the ladder too short by six foot, he must climb up and down by a rope on a broken wall . . . to fetch his victuals . . . for tho' his friends would have given him a cord and a basket to draw up his victuals in, yet such was the malice of his keepers, that they would not suffer this."

Continuing in this damp hole his limbs grew so numb that one day as he came to the top of the ladder with his basket of food in one hand, and was reaching for the rope with the other, he missed it, and fell down upon the stones and was so wounded in the head and bruised that he was taken up for dead. "Then they put him into a hole underneath the other, for there were two rows of such vaulted holes in the wall. This hole was called the Oven, and so little, that some baker's ovens have been bigger, tho' not so high. Here (the door being shut) was scarcely any air, there being no window or hole. And . . . they would not suffer him to take the air, tho' he was almost spent for want of breath." Two friends offered their bond for £40 for his release and to lie in his place, "body for body" in this noisome hole, so that James might go to a friend's house to recover; but all these requests were refused. Eight months of such confinement wore away his strength, but did not subdue his spirit. He was still only eighteen years old and so small that his friends spoke of him affectionately as "little James" and his enemies named him in derision "the little quaking lad." But if his body was weak his spirit was strong and victorious. In December 1655 he wrote to Dewsbury (who was also at the time in prison): "These bonds have been very serviceable, to the piercing of the hearts of many, and the discovery of the spirits of my persecutors, and the confirming of those in the Truth that were convinced. They have laboured to make my bonds grievous, but my strength the Philistines know not." In April 1656 he died and was buried in the castle-yard. Thomas Shortland and his friend Anne Langley were with him the last night and bore witness that "never was there such sweet departing; and at his departing his last words were: 'Now I must go' . . . and he bade me (T.S.) that I should not hold him, but let him go, and said it over again: 'You will not hold me?'" And then Anne said: "Dear heart, we will not hold thee," and he said: "Now I go," and stretched himself and fell into a sweet sleep,

THE "BULL AND MOUTH"

In this "new hired great tavern chapel" Howgill, Burrough and others "threshed" among "the world." In 1666 the building was destroyed by the Great Fire. (See pp. 139–140)

(From an old print)

To face p. 145

and slept about an hour . . . and so drew breath no more." "Thus," says Sewel, "this valiant soldier of the Lamb conquered through sufferings." James Parnell was the first of the band of Publishers of Truth to seal his witness with his life and his blood proved a fruitful seed, Colchester becoming one of the strongholds of the Quaker faith.

Meanwhile Camm and Audland had set out for Bristol "through the counties" and after some preliminary service, including visits to Oxford and Banbury, we find them arriving at Bristol in September 1654. The months that followed were some of the most wonderful in all the wonderful story of the early Quaker movement. At Bristol, as at Sedbergh and other places, there were seeking souls who had spent much time in prayer and fasting, waiting for the Lord to manifest Himself, and to them Camm and Audland came as God's messengers sent in answer to their prayers.

On the first Sunday they were there, after spending the early morning in prayer by the side of a little stream outside the city, they returned to find the house where they were staying filled with people and the street outside crowded. An old man offered the use of his field, called Earlsmead, and the people trooped into it "like an army." Here they spoke to the multitude "in the mighty power of God Almighty, opening the way of life." "Indeed," says one who was present, "it was a notable day, worthy to be left on record, that our children may read and tell to their children." Camm writing of the busy days which followed says: "We are with them from six in the morning: they will come to us before we are up: and unto eleven or sometimes one at night they will never be from us. Go into the fields they will follow us, or go into any house, the house will be filled full, so that we cannot tell how we should get from them." Again in a letter to George Fox he writes: "We have here in Bristol most commonly 3,000 to 4,000 at a meeting. The priests and magistrates begin to rage, but the soldiers [of the Commonwealth] keep them down; for the Governor of the Castle is not against us, and the Captain of the Royal Fort is absolutely convinced . . . and we hit some every time we shoot, for 'our bow abides in strength.'"

The weather was very cold with frost and snow, but the two friends worked unceasingly. "Every day," they said, "was like one long meeting." Howgill and Burrough, in London, were

greatly stirred by the news and write : "We have received letters from our dear brethren . . . the mighty power of the Lord is that way : that is a precious city and a gallant people : their net is like to break with fishes, they have caught so much [there] and all the coast thereabout : mighty is His work and power in this His day. Shout for joy, all ye holy ones, for the Lord rides on in power to get Himself a name."

At the end of September Camm and Audland returned to the North for a visit, and Howgill and Burrough came to Bristol and continued the work. On Sunday, October 29th, a meeting was held at the fort, some 2,000 people so thronging the Quaker Publishers that they had difficulty in getting away. The magistrates took alarm, and commanded them to depart out of the town, "but," they say, "we were bold and said we were free-born men, and we knew no law we had transgressed, and, therefore, we should not be at any man's will, but when He moved us that called us, we should, and come in again as He moved. So we passed away, and all the people were silent, and the priests and magistrates were enraged. We stayed till night and then went out of the city ; and this day we were moved to come in again and to walk in the streets."

A little later Fox paid short visits to most of the places in the South where the new work was opening up. We hear of him in Kent and Sussex, at Reading, Coggeshall and Colchester, then at Cambridge, where the students rose up against him, "for," says Fox, "they knew I was so against their trade which they were there as apprentices to learn, the trade of preaching, that they raged as bad as ever Diana's craftsmen did to Paul." Fox's commanding personality, on this as on other occasions, saved him from the fury of the mob. "I kept on my horseback," he says, "and rid through them in the Lord's power. Oh ! said they, he shines ; he glisters : but they unhorsed Captain Amor Stoddart before he could get to the inn." Then Fox passed through the Midlands and hearing of the Evesham persecutions and of stocks a yard and a-half high prepared for his coming, he spent a night in the town, visited the prisoners and rode away just as the magistrates were coming to seize him. About the end of 1655, Fox set out for an important journey to the South-west of England, accompanied by Captain Edward Pyott, of Bristol, and William Salt, of London. They passed through Dorset and Devon

without opposition, and entered Cornwall, "a dark country" not yet visited by Friends. Soon after their arrival, they were arrested at St. Ives on account of a paper which Fox had written, and were thrown into Launceston Gaol. The Assizes did not come on for nine weeks, and during the interval the prisoners paid for their board and for the keep of their horses, and were treated fairly well. They were sentenced to the heavy fine of twenty marks apiece for contempt of court, with imprisonment until the fines were paid. They now felt it right to refuse any longer to pay the seven shillings a week each which the gaoler had hitherto demanded, and he thereupon turned them into a noisome dungeon called Doomsdale, usually reserved for witches and murderers. It was during Fox's imprisonment at Launceston that Cromwell was told by his chaplain that to imprison Fox was the surest way to spread his principles, and so it actually proved! Many influential persons came to see him in his prison and were "convinced," amongst others, Thomas Lower, who afterwards married Mary Fell, and there was besides a constant stream of Friends going and coming, to confer with Fox, and these published the Quaker message far and wide. Ann Downer, afterwards Ann Whitehead, came all the way from London on foot to buy and dress the prisoners' food and take things down in shorthand for them. It was easy to imprison the messengers, but not their message!

Amongst other letters, Fox wrote from Launceston to Friends in the ministry: "Let all nations hear the sound by word or writing. Spare no place, spare no tongue nor pen, but be obedient to the Lord God: go through the work and be valiant for the truth upon earth; tread and trample all that is contrary under. . . . Be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come, that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them; then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one."

In January 1656, Dewsbury was released from a long imprisonment at Northampton and enjoyed three years of freedom, which he spent in visiting Friends throughout Great Britain. W. C. Braithwaite says: "If we had a continuous record of his service, it would reflect a magnetic personality more tender than that of Fox, but almost equally impregnated with high courage and inspiration." A few typical instances of his work may be

given. At Northampton a General Meeting was being held in a field outside the town; the authorities had broken it up, but Dewsbury continued it, six soldiers standing in the field meanwhile with their horses and their arms. When Dewsbury knelt in prayer they dragged him away, but when he knelt again on the road and continued praying, their hearts were touched and they let him return to the field and finish the meeting in peace. On May 3, 1657, he went on board the *Woodhouse*, which was then lying in the Downs ready to begin her memorable journey across the Atlantic, and bade God-speed to the brave and devoted little company on board. In August 1658 he visited Scotland and, we are told, rode as far as Berwick with his companion, Samuel Thornton, and then they bought shoes for themselves and went forward on foot "with great joy." It was harvest time, and they met with hundreds of people to whom they published Truth in the fields and on the highways. "Some hundreds of miles," he says, "the Lord led me on foot in a short time for the seed's sake." At the end of 1659 he came south to London, and was very serviceable in bringing about the reconciliation between Fox and Nayler. Then he went to Bristol, where meetings were being much disturbed by an excited mob. The news had just come of the martyrdom of William Robinson and Marmaduke Stephenson, at Boston, the previous October, and the company of grief-stricken Friends had gathered to wait upon the Lord. Dewsbury says: "We were bowed down before our God, and prayer was made unto Him, when they knocked at the door. It came upon my spirit it were the rude people, and the life of God did mightily arise, and they had no power to come in till we were clear before our God. . . . And the Lord God who is the God of His seed . . . caused their hearts to fail and they passed away and not any harm done to any of us." "So," continues Dewsbury, "we had a precious time with Friends and I passed away with much clearness and freedom from the city of Bristol, Friends being very precious in the dominion of the Life of God."

We must now turn to the first beginnings of work in Wales, Ireland and Scotland.

Mention has already been made of Morgan Lloyd's enquiries about George Fox in 1653, and of the fact that one of his messengers John ap John, was convinced and became an earnest Friend. He

became the centre of a little group of Friends in North Wales, and was the first in the Principality to suffer for his faith. In 1655 or 1656, three Welsh-speaking Friends from the North visited Radnorshire, where many members of a "shattered Baptist" community were convinced; but the most important work in Wales was that done by Thomas Holme, of Kendal, whom we may regard as the apostle of Welsh Quakerism. With his wife (formerly Elizabeth Leavens) and Alice Birkett of Kendal he travelled through the South, and little companies of Friends were gathered in several places. Wales was at this time suffering much from a want of religious teachers, and in 1650 an Act had been passed for the propagation of the Gospel in the Principality. Vavasor Powell, who, when quite a young man of twenty-two, had voluntarily devoted himself to the work of a travelling preacher in Wales, and had already met with great success, responded heartily to this call. He gathered round him a band of missionary preachers, and became known as the "metropolitan of the itinerants." Although he had not himself much sympathy with the Quaker position, his congregations proved receptive; and many were convinced. Amongst these we may mention Thomas Ellis, Richard Davies, the Welshpool hatter, the author of a racy journal, and William Lewis, at whose house a meeting was held for many years.

In the summer of 1657 Fox visited Wales, with John ap John as companion, Hubberthorne and Holme also being with him part of the time. Holme had written of serious trouble amongst the little companies of Friends in consequence of the controversies about James Nayler. Fox writes that he found those "who had turned against Truth burst into parties and got up into heaps one against another, till Truth was evil spoken of." At Tenby and Haverfordwest the Friends were cordially welcomed; and on leaving Tenby the mayor and a friendly justice, with their wives, and a number of others went with them half a mile to the water's side and there Fox knelt down and prayed the Lord to preserve them. In Radnorshire many thousand people were present at a meeting, and it was reported that, if Fox had held another meeting, half the country would have come in, they were so taken with the Truth. George Fox says: "There was a meeting like a leaguer for multitude, and I walked a little off from the meeting, whilst the people was a-gathering . . . for I had a great travail

upon me for the salvation of the people. And so I passed up to the meeting and stood atop of a chair about three hours, and sometimes leaned my hand off a man's head, and stood a pretty while before I began to speak. And many people sat a-horseback: and at last I felt the power of the Lord went over them all, and the Lord's everlasting life and truth shined over them all, and the scriptures was opened to them . . . and all was bowed down under the power of God, and parted peaceably and quietly with great satisfaction . . . and Christ and the Apostles' free teaching set atop of all the hireling teachers: and the people turned to Him."

The founder of Irish Quakerism was William Edmondson, an old Cromwellian soldier and a man of sterling character. He removed from Westmorland to Antrim about 1652, having been already attracted towards Friends, and in 1653, when in England on business, he heard James Nayler preach and was finally convinced. Many professors of religion came to "jangle" with him, which grieved his spirit, though it worked for good, as it led to enquiry about Friends and many were convinced. Removing to Lurgan, he and his brother began the first settled meeting of Friends in Ireland in 1654. The first visit by English Friends was paid this same year, and in the two following years many more came, the chief leaders being Burrough and Howgill.

The Civil War had aroused the fears of the Roman Catholics in Ireland, and, in the name of King Charles, the country had risen in insurrection, and many cruelties had been committed. Cromwell had avenged the excesses in the massacres of Drogheda and Wexford and had set himself to expatriate the military leaders and to confiscate the lands of malcontents, whose places he filled with soldiers and new planters from England. Quakerism was, therefore, seeking admission to a land under military law, whose native population was embittered from recent conquest, and whose new settlers were mostly zealous Puritans. The campaign was consequently carried on amidst much opposition. Burrough and Howgill were in the midst of their strenuous and successful work in London and it was no light thing to leave it, but the call to Ireland came to them as clearly as it had come to Patrick 1,250 years before; to Burrough, late in the evening of June 28, 1655, when the moving of the Lord came upon him to go to Dublin

city, and to Howgill on the 7th of July, "about the tenth hour, near Islington, a mile off London, when I was waiting upon the Lord, saying: 'Go to Dublin in Ireland with my servant Edward Burrough.'"

The two Friends reached Dublin in August, and had good service in the city, though they found the people proud and dissolute. Three weeks later they parted, very sorrowfully, Howgill going south with a cornet of horse who was "very loving" and Burrough remaining in Dublin, where were a few that hungered after God. A little later he, too, moved southwards to Waterford, Kilkenny and other places. Writing from Cork in February 1656, Howgill says: "The word of the Lord we have sown all along about a hundred and twenty miles in the principal towns and cities from Dublin west and in the heart of the nation, and much is done in so little time. . . . There is some in Dublin meets together and grows, and at another city called Kilkenny another meeting, and at another city called Waterford many pretty people; at Youghal, a seaport town, there is a few that meets; at the city of Cork, where I am at present, there is many will hear. . . . The Governor is a moderate man and his family: a pretty many captains and majors and officers hath heard and doth daily. . . . At Kinsale the Governor is loving, and divers there is convinced and some soldiers: I have had many meetings in the garrison, and the priests are all on a rage and posts up and down with lies, and informs against the officers who have received us, and all is on fire." On the whole, Ireland proved stony soil for the Quaker message. Nevertheless, a succession of earnest men and women sought out receptive souls and brought them the message of the inward light. Many of the converts were soldiers, such as William Ames who had fought for the king, and who became a Quaker pioneer in Holland, Cornet Cook and Corporal Richard Pike of Cork, and others who had been in Cromwell's Army. The progress of Quakerism in Ireland was slow, but sure; Thomas Loe, of Oxford, was one of the most devoted labourers, "he had blessed service and many were convinced by him." In August 1660 he wrote to Fox from the North that persecution has slackened and "things are pretty cool." In the West whole meetings had been carried to prison in several places, yet things were generally well with Friends and meetings fresh and living. A blessed presence was amongst them, and many were freely

given up to bear all things for the Truth's sake. "I am well," he says, "and the Lord's blessings and pure presence is with me in my labours, and yet it is on me to stay in this nation, and the thing hath oft run through me, Thou must travel through this storm with Friends here, and I am truly and wholly given up into the will of God."

Scotland was even less receptive than Ireland to the Quaker message. Presbyterianism was in undisputed possession of the country, a type of religion well suited to the Scotch character, and there was very little of that unsatisfied craving after reality which had prepared the way for the Quaker Publishers in England. Visits from English Friends began in 1653 or 1654, but the service at first was almost entirely among the English garrison, "as for the Scots they could not endure sound doctrine, but turned away their ears from hearing the truth."

In 1657, John Hall wrote to Margaret Fell: "There is soldiers straggled up and down which is convinced and some Scotch people, but little establishment among them." General Monck instructed his officers to discharge from the Army any soldiers who were Quakers and a drastic purge followed, which illustrates the sympathy that existed between Quakerism and the religious standpoint of many of the Puritan soldiers, and also the inevitable conflict between the spiritual warfare of the Quakers and the carnal weapons with which Cromwell was seeking to establish the Kingdom of God. September 1657, Fox visited in Scotland with Alexander Parker, Lancaster and Widders as companions. The Clydesdale Friends had been excommunicated by the Synod at Glasgow, who had directed that no people in other parishes trade with them, and the Presbyterian ministers had followed this up by pronouncing five curses directed against Quaker principles. When it was known that Fox was in the country he was ordered to appear before the Council, who commanded him to leave the country within seven days. He paid no attention to this, but went on as before, visiting the small scattered companies of Friends and breaking the ground in fresh places. At Glasgow a meeting was appointed, but not one of the townspeople came to it, so Fox and the Friends who were with him "declared Truth through the town." At Stirling they could get no meeting "they were so closed up in darkness," but,

says Fox, "next morning there came a man with a horse that was to run a race, and most of the town's people and the officers went to see it. As they came back from the race, I had a brave opportunity to declare the day of the Lord, and His word of life amongst them. Some confessed to it, and some opposed; but the Lord's truth and power came over them all." At Leith, the innkeeper and several friendly people told Fox that warrants were out against him because he had not left Scotland when the seven days were expired, but he replied: "What do ye tell me of their warrants against me? If there were a cart-load of them I do not heed them, for the Lord's power is over them all." So he continued his visits, no one meddling with him, and then went back to Edinburgh, taking with him Robert Widders whom he describes as "a thundering man against hypocrisy and deceit." They passed the first two sentries, rode up the street to the market-place, past the main guard, out at the gate by the third sentry, and so clear out at the suburbs, and there put up their horses at an inn, it being the seventh day of the week. George Fox continues: "Now I saw and felt that we had rid as it were, against the cannon's mouth, or the sword's point: but the Lord's power and immediate hand carried us over the heads of them all. Next day I went up to the meeting in the city, Friends having notice that I would be at it. There came many officers and soldiers to it, and a glorious meeting it was; the everlasting power of God was set over the nation, and His Son reigned in His glorious power; and all was quiet, and no man offered to meddle with me. When the meeting was ended, and I had visited Friends, I came out of the city to my inn again: and next day, being the second day of the week, we set forward through the country towards the borders of England."

Soon afterwards on leaving Dunbar, Fox writes: "This was the last meeting I had in Scotland; the Truth and the power of God was set over that nation, and many by the power and spirit of God, were turned to the Lord Jesus Christ, their Saviour and Teacher, whose blood was shed for them; and since there is a great increase and great there will be in Scotland. For when first I set my horse's feet upon the Scottish ground, I felt the Seed of God to sparkle about me, like innumerable sparks of fire. Not but there is abundance of the thick, cloddy earth of hypocrisy and falseness above, and a briery, brambly nature, which is to be

burnt up with God's word, and plowed up with His spiritual plow, before God's Seed brings forth heavenly and spiritual fruit to His glory. But the husbandman is to wait in patience."

The reaping came when, between the years 1663 and 1666 an important group of men, including Alexander Jaffray, Patrick Livingstone, George Keith and David and Robert Barclay, separated themselves from the narrow Calvinism of the Presbyterian Church and joined the Quaker movement.

These itinerating ministers were the advance guard of Quakerism and the strength of the movement. Not only did they bear the brunt of persecution, but they also had upon their shoulders the heavy burden of the care of the Churches. Their courage and endurance were wonderful, but we cannot wonder that some few fainted by the way. Some of the best and bravest had already sealed their testimony with their lives, others were constantly in prison, yet in spite of all hindrances and the strenuous opposition of the authorities, we find that the message of the Light of Christ within had made its way throughout the land in a marvellously short time. By the beginning of 1656 groups of Friends were to be found in almost every county, and not only in the North, but in London, Bristol, and other important centres there had been a great in-gathering. During the next three years, Wales, Scotland and Ireland received the message, and the work continued in England though perhaps with not quite the same apostolic fervour as in the early days. The message had made a triumphant progress through the land, but the service was proving a costly one for Friends, and there was besides a hardening in the Puritan character which made it less susceptible to the Quaker teaching, than in the days of religious zeal and unrest. To George Fox it seemed as if the Kingdom of God which, in the first freshness of his service, he had thought was so near at hand, was now more remote, although, at the same time, he realized that it had already come in the hearts of thousands who had let the Light of the living Christ shine in.

CHAPTER X

JAMES NAYLER'S FALL AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

"Reader, if you are not acquainted with it, I would recommend to you, above all church-narratives, to read Sewel's History of the Quakers. . . . You will here read the true story of that much-injured, ridiculed man (who, perhaps, hath been a by-word in your mouth), James Nayler: what dreadful sufferings, with what patience, he endured, even to the boring through of his tongue with red-hot irons, without a murmur; and with what strength of mind, when the delusion he had fallen into, which they stigmatised for blasphemy, had given way to clearer thoughts, he could renounce his error, in a strain of the beautifullest humility, yet keep his first grounds, and be a Quaker still!—so different from the practice of your common converts from enthusiasm who, when they apostatize, apostatize all, and think they can never get far enough from the society of their former errors, even to the renunciation of some saving truths, with which they had been mingled, not implicated."—CHARLES LAMB, *Essays of Elia*, "A Quakers' Meeting."

It was not only the external conditions alluded to in the last chapter which proved a hindrance to the spread of Quakerism during these years; the leaders had also to face much greater difficulties, caused by the extravagancies of one of their own comrades, whose actions seriously compromised the whole movement in the minds of many thoughtful people, and, moreover, occasioned divisions within the fellowship itself.

James Nayler was considered the most brilliant of the Quaker preachers, and for several years after his "call" he laboured unceasingly and successfully, never sparing himself, and cheerfully suffering persecution and imprisonment. We are told that his preaching was "eminent," his message being delivered "with such power and reaching energy," that he was the means of convincing many. He was young and very good-looking, and had a personal charm of manner which attracted people to him, and the result of all this was that "many came to esteem him much above his brethren," and as he was not sufficiently humble and

watchful to bear the strain of popularity and of the flattery which some foolish persons heaped upon him, he allowed himself to be led away into excesses, which brought dishonour upon the Quaker profession and sad suffering and sorrow to himself.

The trouble began during his service in London in 1656. For some time he was working there single-handed ; afterwards with Edward Burrough, and the service, though successful, was always very strenuous and made large demands on his physical and mental strength. Writing in later years of his time of darkness, Nayler says that when he entered London he had a foreboding that some trial, he knew not what, would befall him there. At first, the same presence and power which he had known elsewhere were with him, but, following his reason in certain matters, he allowed his mind to become ensnared by trifles and to lose its watchfulness, and thus the Light of Christ in his heart became clouded. He says : "The provocation of that time of temptation was exceeding great against the pure love of God ; yet He left me not ; for after I had given myself under that power, and darkness was above, my adversary so prevailed, that all things were turned and perverted against my right seeing, hearing, or understanding ; only a secret hope and faith I had in my God whom I had served, that He would bring me through it, and to the end of it, and that I should again see the day of my redemption from under it all ; and this quieted my soul in my greatest tribulation." He did win through, as we shall see, to victory and peace, but not until he had first yielded to temptation and passed through great darkness and suffering.

Martha Simmonds and some other women of much enthusiasm but weak judgment had taken part in meetings in a way which met with the disapproval of Friends, and when reproved by Howgill and Burrough went to Nayler demanding justice. He refused to pass judgment contrary to his brethren, but his regard for the women prevented him from "disowning" their spirit. He was physically overwrought, and when soon afterwards he went on to Bristol and these women and some other misguided Friends went with him, he allowed them to behave with most extravagant flattery, bowing, kneeling and singing before him, and justifying themselves by the example of the Shunammite woman who fell down at Elisha's feet. Bristol Friends were greatly distressed, and persuaded Nayler to go and see Fox, who was in prison at

Launceston. The Devonshire justices had, however, just ordered that the roads in that county should be stopped to all Quakers travelling without a pass, and so Nayler and a Friend who was with him were taken near Okehampton and thrown into Exeter gaol, which soon became full of Friends arrested in the same way. In Exeter gaol he fasted much, kept very quiet, and was lovingly reasoned with and watched over by some of his fellow-prisoners, one of whom wrote to Margaret Fell, asking her not to believe every report which she heard about Nayler, who was innocent of the things that were spoken and done. The women, however, and some others continued to flatter and excite him and when Fox visited him on his release from Launceston he found him "dark and much out," and warned him: "James, it will be harder for thee (if ever thou come to know and own Christ) to get down thy rude company than it was for thee to set them up, whose impudence doth sport and blaspheme the truth."

When the Exeter prisoners were set at liberty, Nayler was accompanied on his journey to London by a party of his admirers. He rode on horseback—one man walked bareheaded before him, others at each stirrup, and others again strewed handkerchiefs in the way. As they went along they shouted "Hosanna!" and sang, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth." It was between two and three in the afternoon when they entered Bristol in heavy rain, so that they were all wet and bedraggled. Passing through Redcliff Gate by the High Cross, they entered the White Hart Inn, which belonged to two Friends. Whilst the women were drying themselves at the fire, the whole party were summoned by the magistrates and clapped into prison. Not a single one of the thousand or more Friends in Bristol had encouraged their proceedings, but although only so few (about seven or eight) had actually taken part in the blasphemous homage paid to Nayler, the news of their proceedings spread far and wide and created a prejudice against Quakerism and a distrust of its teachings which it took long years to overcome.

On his examination the next day Nayler admitted that he had not reproved the women, but had only admonished them to be careful to sing nothing, but what they were moved to by the Lord. When asked: "Art thou the only Son of God?" he replied: "I am the Son of God, but I have many brethren." He also said: "The Lord hath made me a sign of His coming, and that honour

that belongeth to Christ Jesus in whom I am revealed may be given to Him, as when on earth at Jerusalem, according to the measure." These words probably give us the key to the underlying thought in Nayler's mind when he submitted to the extravagant homage of his followers. He was appointed to be a sign of Christ's coming, and by allowing the play-acting of a Messianic entry into Bristol he and his friends were seeking to bring home with dramatic emphasis the Quaker doctrine that Christ was come to teach His people Himself and was revealed in His saints.

The Bristol magistrates could not understand his point of view or make any allowance for proceedings which appeared to them simply blasphemous. They were, however, at a loss what to do and sent Nayler on to London where Parliament appointed a Committee of fifty-five to consider and report on his conduct.

His answers before this Committee were similar to those given at Bristol, and he ended by saying : " I do abhor that any of that honour which is due to God should be given to me as I am a creature. But it pleased the Lord to set me up as a sign of the coming of the Righteous One ; and what hath been done in my passing through the towns, I was commanded by the power of the Lord to suffer such things to be done to the outward [man] as a sign. I abhor any honour as a creature."

Anthony Pearson tells us that the whole assembly except some violent men of the Committee were satisfied with Nayler's answers. One man said : " That which sticks most with me is the nearness of his opinion to that which is a glorious truth, that the spirit is personally in us." Another, referring to Nayler's statement that Christ was in him, exclaimed : " I wonder why any man should be so amazed at this—Is not God in every horse, in every stone, in every creature ? . . . If you hang every man that says Christ is in you the hope of glory, you will hang a good many." And still another (Colonel Holland, Member for Lancashire) urged a plea for liberty of conscience ; " Consider," he said, " the state of this nation, what the price of our blood is, liberty of conscience, the instrument [of Government] gives it us. We remember how many Christians were formerly martyred under this notion of blasphemy, and who can define what it is ? I am wholly against the question."

Nevertheless, after lengthy debate, it was resolved without

division that Nayler was "guilty of horrid blasphemy," and was "a grand imposter and seducer of the people."

Then followed another long discussion as to how he was to be punished. One member urged that by common law, blasphemy and heresy were punishable by death. Others appealed to the statute *de hæretico comburendo;* others took the view that six months' imprisonment, or possibly banishment, was the limit of punishment that could be given.

The sentence finally passed upon him was cruel in the extreme. On the following day (December 16, 1656) he was to be set on the pillory, in the Palace Yard, Westminster, for two hours, and be whipped by the hangman through the streets to the Old Exchange, London. On Saturday, the 20th, he was to stand in the pillory at the Old Exchange from eleven to one, where his tongue was to be bored through with a hot iron, and his forehead to be branded with the letter B (for Blasphemer). Afterwards he was to be sent to Bristol, and carried through the city on horseback, bare-ridged, with his face backwards, and was to be whipped there on the market day following his arrival. Lastly he was to be imprisoned in Bridewell, London, till released by Parliament, and was there to be kept in solitary confinement, without the use of pen, ink, or paper. The Speaker, in reading out the sentence, told Nayler that the House had mingled mercy with justice, as it desired his reformation rather than his destruction. "God," replied Nayler, "has given me a body: God will, I hope, give me a spirit to endure it. The Lord lay not these things to your charge."

The terrible sentence was carried out remorselessly, in spite of the facts that Cromwell expressed his strong disapproval of it, and that a public petition and other protests were made. Nayler endured it all with wonderful courage and patience, and the crowd who had gathered to watch and jeer at him lifted their hats and stood bareheaded round the pillory in token of their respect.

When the last act of the cruel drama had been enacted at Bristol he was brought back to London and thrown into Bridewell prison, where he remained for nearly three years, until released by the Rump Parliament in September 1659. He was at first kept in very close confinement, in a cold damp place called the "Hole" where he was not even allowed a candle. On February 24, 1657, his wife petitioned that he might have air, fire and candle-

light, and that she might be allowed to attend him and supply him with food. This was to some extent granted, and in March, Hubberthorne was allowed to visit him and found him "loving and much nearer the truth than he was," and it was not long before the clouds entirely lifted, and he saw clearly the false position into which he had allowed himself to be led. His repentance was deep and lasting, but it was some time before he was again fully recognized by Friends and welcomed as a co-labourer in the cause of truth.

We cannot wonder at the hesitation of Fox and other Friends to receive him again into unity, when we remember the serious consequences which his conduct had for the spread of Quakerism. There was not only the discouragement to his fellow-members, and the public scandal and hostility to Friends aroused by the whole of the proceedings, but many unstable and turbulent spirits took occasion to disturb meetings under the pretence of supporting Nayler, and this brought about division amongst Friends. One effect of the whole affair was to deepen the impression on men's minds of the dangerous tendency of Quaker principles, and petitions to Parliament to pass a Bill to suppress the mischief poured in from many parts of the country. In response, the law against vagrancy was stiffened to such an extent that any persecuting justice had the travelling Quaker ministers entirely at his mercy.

As early as October 1656, when Nayler was in prison at Exeter, a letter to Margaret Fell says that London Friends were for the time like the Church at Corinth, one saying: "I am of James [Nayler]; another "I am of Francis [Howgill] and Edward [Burrough]." Howgill and Burrough were in great exercise of spirit and could scarcely enjoy a quiet meeting. Fox wrote to Nayler that the responsibility for the scandal and serious division that were being caused lay on him because he would not condemn the proceedings of his company. Dewsbury wrote in 1657 urging him "to judge down and reign over this spirit, that hath and doth seek to make disorder and strife amongst brethren." In reply, Nayler says that these rents and divisions are the great grief of his soul, beyond what can be spoken, and in 1658, during his long imprisonment, he fully confessed his fault and says that his conduct "with the spirit of Christ in me is judged and condemned."

After this he made several attempts to obtain Fox's forgiveness and as soon as he was set at liberty in September 1659, he went

to see him at Reading. But Fox was passing through a time of great travail of spirit. He found it very hard to forgive the hurt which Nayler's conduct had done to the cause of Truth and it was still some months before the joint efforts of Dewsbury and Margaret Fell were successful in bringing about a reconciliation. Dewsbury writes in February 1660 : "In fulness of time I was led of the Lord into London. . . . Mighty was His Majesty among His people in the day He healed up the breach which had been so long to the sadness of the hearts of many. The Lord clothed my dear brethren G. F., E. B., F. H. with a precious wisdom. A healing spirit did abound within them with the rest of the Lord's people there that day . . . and dear J. N. the Lord was with him."

Soon after he was set at liberty Nayler went to Bristol, and in a public meeting confessed his offence in such a way that the meeting was broken into tears and many were reconciled to him. The remaining months of his life were mostly spent in London where he lived in "great self-denial and was very jealous of himself," but had great service at the regular Friends' meeting in the Strand, where many "great in the outward" resorted to hear him. In October 1660, he set out on foot for the North, intending to go home to his wife and children at Wakefield, but near Huntingdon he was robbed and found towards evening lying bound in a field. He was taken to a Friend's house and cared for by a Quaker doctor ; but nothing could be done, and he passed away in a few hours in great peace. His last message to his friends, spoken about two hours before his death, enables us to feel the rare beauty of his spirit and shows clearly that he had not passed through the sad experiences of his life in vain : "There is a spirit which I feel that delights to do no evil nor to revenge any wrong, but delights to endure all things, in hope to enjoy its own in the end. Its hope is to outlive all wrath and contention, and to weary out all exultation and cruelty, or whatever is of a nature contrary to itself. It sees to the end of all temptations. As it bears no evil in itself, so it conceives none in thoughts to any other. If it be betrayed, it bears it, for its ground and spring is the mercies and forgiveness of God. Its crown is meekness, its life is everlasting love unfeigned ; and takes its kingdom with entreaty and not with contention, and keeps it by lowliness of mind. . . . I found it alone, being forsaken. I have fellowship therein with them who

lived in dens and desolate places in the earth, who through death obtained this resurrection and eternal holy life."

W. C. Braithwaite concludes his account of Nayler's fall and restoration by saying: "Nayler's time of clouded judgment lasted for less than one year out of the eight of his active work as a Friend. Yet this one year has been often suffered to eclipse the whole of his life. But when we rightly understand the atmosphere of thought in which he moved, we are less arrested by the fact that such a fall took place than by the meekness and Christ-like beauty of soul which came to him after this sore discipline. Not in that pitiful procession through the rain at Bristol, but in the spirit of forgiveness and uncomplaining acceptance of suffering which he afterwards showed, was he set before the Puritan England of his day as a sure sign that Christ was indeed come. . . . One or two [of his writings] written after his spiritual recovery, are of great force and beauty. . . . They have the savour of an experience refined in the crucible of shame and suffering." [1]

W. C. Braithwaite continues: "Before we pass from the fall of James Nayler it may be well to ask ourselves how far the extravagances of language and conduct which are part of the picture of early Quakerism throw doubt on the validity of the great experience of the Inner Light. We expect a certain exuberance and exaltation to accompany the first manifestations of such an experience, and the intense fervour, which showed itself in 'tremblings' of body and in seizings by 'the power,' will, accordingly, present no serious difficulty to our minds. But we shall not approve some of the other accompaniments of the new experience—the disturbance of ministers, the virulence of controversy, the high language in which the new way of life was often described, and some of the conduct connected with the testifying by signs. These things, it is true, were in part the natural outcome of a great sincerity, which could not tolerate shams and empty professions, and of a spiritual experience, fresh, new and vital . . . and in so far we can justify them; but they were also in part a product of the faulty mental environment which belonged to the seventeenth century. We do not now regard the inspiration of prophet or saint as freeing him from the limitations of his own personality and of the age in which he lived; we rather think of the Divine illumination as allying itself with

[1] *Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 275–276.

and to some extent coloured by the human personality through which it shines. But, in accordance with the sharp division made by the Puritan age between the undivine natural world, and the Divine world, Friends, for the most part, thought of the vitalizing experience which came to them as a power which controlled them, not in partnership with their own faculties, but independently and infallibly. This explains much of their high language and extreme positiveness of conduct, and also justifies from their point of view, the literalness with which they followed the prophetic precedents in the matter of Signs. . . . This great experience [of the Inner Light] is the commanding fact of Quaker history, and we need not be surprised to find that its adjustment to other facts of life was a work of time.

"Friends made the true adjustment from the first, in two most important directions, which at once marked them off from the Ranters and other ill-balanced mystical groups. They refused to admit that unrighteousness or immoral conduct could proceed from the light, and, as we have seen, they tested, in doubtful cases, the reality of spiritual guidance by asking whether it pointed to action which crossed the carnal nature. Righteousness and self-sacrifice were their marks of heavenly-mindedness. Further, they provided in their 'retired' meetings times in which the soul could foster its larger spiritual life in fellowship and in waiting upon the Lord. . . .

"We are able, in the present day, to work out a fuller conception of spiritual guidance than our forefathers possessed, especially through recognizing that the intellect is rather a province of man's spiritual nature than something which stands apart from it, and that our own faculties have their important part to play in developing the eye which can make use of the spiritual light. But in their resolute obedience to all the demands which the light made upon them and in their sure insight into truth the early Friends have never been surpassed, and, in spite of all crudities, abundantly justified their name of 'Children of the Light.'" [1]

Another result of Nayler's fall was the fresh flood of controversial literature by which it was followed. Until now Friends themselves had usually been the attacking parties, assailing the Puritan ministers as false prophets and anti-Christs. Their success had roused the anger of their opponents, and now that

[1] *Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 276–278.

Nayler's conduct had brought discredit upon the central message of Quakerism,—the experience of the Inner Light—Friends were themselves stigmatized as "anti-Christs," and called upon to defend their position. Many of the pamphlets were in apocalyptic language, and the titles sound strange to modern ears. Fox, for example, in 1659, replied to over one hundred pamphlets which had appeared against Friends in a book which he called *The Great Mistery of the Great Whore Unfolded, and Antichrist's Kingdom Revealed unto Destruction: In Answer to many False Doctrines and Principles which Babylon's Merchants have traded with, etc.* Most of the Quaker leaders took part in these polemics, and on the Puritan side we find Baxter and Bunyan, Dr. Owen, Prynne, Samuel Clarke, Matthew Poole, and many other well-known names. The very titles of the pamphlets show the virulence with which the contest was carried on—as for example, "*The Quakers' Folly made manifest to all Men*, answered by George Whitehead in *The Voice of Wisdom uttered forth against Antichrist's Folly and Deceit;* or *The Boasting Baptist dismounted and the Beast Disarmed.* answered by *The Quaker Quasht and his Quarrel Quelled.* If we read extracts from them, the violence of the language shocks us.

We cannot but regret that the clear vision and the faithfulness which made Friends strong to publish their message in spite of persecution, also inclined them to be uncharitable towards those who differed from them. They were so sure that they were right, that they seemed unable to make allowance for others who saw the Truth differently or imperfectly. Strong controversial language was the habit of the times, but we can at least say that Friends never showed a persecuting spirit, nor ever descended to private scandal as a means of championing the truths for which they stood.

In those days a man's beliefs were a vital part of his life, and whilst we deplore the bitterness of these religious controversies, we admire their earnestness. We must also remember that religious liberty was a new idea to men's minds, and it was an important step in the right direction for *words*, however, passionate, to replace *deeds* of violence. The zeal with which Friends threw themselves into the religious disputes of the day is only another evidence of the wide range of their activities and of the universal character of their mission.

CHAPTER XI

BEGINNINGS OF QUAKER ORGANIZATION

"The primitive form of organization which was gradually worked out by George Fox and his helpers for the Society of Friends was admirably fitted to the genius of the movement. They gave as much scope as was possible under any system for the free, unhindered circulation of the Spirit. . . . They kept close to the ideal of a fellowship of believers, living in obedience to the Spirit revealed within them. . . . Their Society was . . . in thought and purpose a Divine democracy, a real communion of saints, living here below, but sharing the life and mind of the eternal, invisible Christ. It was in essence a miniature kingdom of God . . . a tiny fragment of the invisible Church. It had no constitution, no creed, no sacraments, no clergy, no ordained officials, no infallibilities, except the infallibility of the guiding Spirit. With all its limitations, this Society, organized in the Restoration period, against the protests of the pure idealists, has proved to be the most impressive experiment in Christian history of a group-mysticism, a religious body practising corporate silence as the basis of worship and maintaining a fundamental faith in Spirit-guided ministry."—Dr. Rufus M. Jones, Introduction to *The Second Period of Quakerism*. pp. xxix–xxx.

From the very beginning of the Quaker movement we have seen that a simple group-life existed amongst those who accepted Fox's message, and that they were bound together by an intense spiritual fellowship resulting from their mutual experience of the light of Christ within. In many cases the teaching had been received by whole communities, already dissociated from the established Churches and united in a common search after Truth. Under these favouring conditions the new truth led the sharers in it into a new order of life in which, as they were obedient to their Divine Guide, they seem surprisingly quickly, without formulating any creed, to have reached substantial agreement on a great variety of questions of principle and practice. W. C. Braithwaite says: "The distinguishing views of Friends are found to be, as a matter of history as well as of theory, corollaries which flowed naturally from the main proposition. That this should have been the case exhibits the boldness and consistency of the early Friends

in the strongest light. Seldom has a great spiritual truth been followed along its untried consequences with surer and more resolute steps. The claims of the Inward Light demanded a separation from all that was outward in religion, and left no place for a man-made ministry or for reliance on the external features of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. But the leaders showed conspicuous courage in so completely laying aside these venerable institutions and relying instead upon the inward spiritual provision of whose substance they were only the shadows. The courage was theirs because it was rooted in experience : they knew the Divine ordination, they were baptized with the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, they had found their spiritual food and communion in Christ Himself. As Fox put it in one of his papers : 'They who are made ministers by the will of God, their word is God, their light is Christ, their Church is in God, their record is the Spirit, their original is the Word which was before all tongues, their gospel is the Lamb of God. . . . The saints' baptism is with one spirit into one body . . . the bread which the saints break is the body of Christ, and the cup they drink is the blood of Christ.' " [1]

It is not only on the more important testimonies relating to worship, ministry, and the sacraments that we find a remarkable agreement on points of practice among the early Friends ; but even on such minor matters as the refusal of " hat-honour," the use of the plain language, the simplification of dress, and the refusal of oaths. No doubt this was due in part to the previous preparation of many of those who joined the movement ; but it must also be attributed to the influence of the leaders, and to the earnestness with which those who were convinced endeavoured to carry out every requirement of their new faith. A letter from Fox in 1653 had probably a great effect. He writes : " My dear brethren in the covenant of life, keep to Yea and Nay, and call the days first-day, second-day, third-day, fourth-day, fifth-day, sixth-day, and seventh-day, as they were given forth and called by God in the beginning."

In the seventeenth century it was the custom for men to wear their hats in the house and in church, except in the presence of superiors or during prayer. To be uncovered before anyone was a distinctive mark of deference. Similarly " thou " was the regular form of speech to social inferiors ; but was regarded as an insult

[1] *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 137–138.

if addressed to an equal, or, worse still, to one entitled to special respect. The behaviour practised by Friends in these matters was no mere caprice, but was the expression in their conduct of their deep-seated conviction that there is no respect of persons with God, and that obedience to the Light required them, in this way, to emphasize the essential brotherhood of all mankind. It was a test of their sincerity which brought them constant reproach and misunderstanding for apparently trivial causes, but their witness on these points touched some of the greatest issues of life, and we must not regard it as apart from their main message, but realize that that message, under the conditions of the time, could not have been fully expressed if Friends had shrunk from applying it fearlessly to every part of life.

In these early days besides such men as Fox, Farnsworth, Dewsbury, Nayler, and others, who were the apostles of the movement, there seem also to have been in most of the settled meetings, leaders who felt a special responsibility for their local Church, and to all these the term "Elder" came to be applied. In some cases these local Elders may have been asked by their neighbours, or by one of the itinerating preachers, to undertake the service, but frequently, we may suppose, that they simply stood out by virtue of their own personality and devotion to the cause, as those to whom their fellow members naturally turned for counsel and guidance.

In a former chapter we have noted that, as early as 1654, some steps towards a simple organization had already been taken by the "Friends of Truth." Regular meetings for waiting upon the Lord had been the first requirement, then Monthly Meetings for Elders and General Meetings for Friends of a district, to keep the fellowship together, as also arrangements for carrying on the aggressive work of "the Camp of the Lord." All these seem to have developed naturally, as the need arose. In addition, Fox had advised attention to such necessary matters as the recording of births and deaths, and the due solemnization and recording of marriages and burials.

George Fox and the early Friends never thought of themselves as a "Sect," or as one "Church" among many. They were a fellowship or society of persons who formed a living part of the true Church of all ages. This Church was as wide as the world and was in ideal, to be the work and creation of the Spirit of Christ, and not a man-made or man-governed institution. To organize

at all was in some degree a surrender of the original ideal ; but, mystic as he was, Fox was a keen observer of the facts of life. He saw the necessity for co-operation, and realized that, if Friends were to give a permanent and united message to the world, individual liberty must, to some extent, be subjected to a corporate judgment. Any form of organization will limit the freedom and enthusiasm of a great spiritual movement, but that which was originated by George Fox and put into practice by the early Friends was admirably adapted to its purpose, and gave as much scope as was possible, under any system, for individual initiative and the free following of the guidance of the Spirit.

Later on, the establishment of Church discipline was one of the forces which changed the aggressive Quaker movement of 1654 into the hermit-like "Society of Friends" of the eighteenth century, but it is impossible to have organization at all without developing a tendency to conservatism, and, without organization, the Quaker fellowship could not have held together under the strain of persecution from without and of divisions within its own borders.

Soon after Fox's release from Launceston gaol in the autumn of 1656, he gave forth an important paper, full of that robust judgment which, coupled with his deep spiritual experience, made him such a great religious leader. In it he gives practical advice to Friends against being clogged with business, against jars and strife which will "eat out the seed in you," against preaching in a "brittle, peevish, hasty, fretful mind," and against gossip and "tattling and idle words," with much more in the same strain. He was, however, anxious that some document should be issued, expressing authoritatively the mind of the *whole community* on the best way of dealing with disorderly conduct, and in response to this concern a meeting was arranged at Balby in November 1656, to consider the interests of Truth, which was attended by one approved member from each meeting in Yorkshire, Lincoln, Derby and Nottingham. The document issued by this meeting constitutes the oldest Church advice on Christian practice issued by any general body of Friends and is still preserved in the records of Marsden Monthly Meeting. It appears to have been modelled on the apostolic letter to the Gentile Christians in Acts XV, and is entitled : "The elders and brethren sendeth unto the brethren in the North these necessary things following ; to

which, if in the light you wait, to be kept in obedience, you shall do well. Farewell."

It is signed by Richard Farnsworth, William Dewsbury, and other Friends. A postscript says: "Dearly beloved friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by, but that all with the measure of light which is pure and holy may be guided, and so in the light walking and abiding these may be fulfilled in the Spirit, not from the letter, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

This postscript shows us that the Quaker leaders did not base their claim to give guidance on their personal authority, but on their own obedience to the Spirit of Truth and the witness of that Spirit in the hearts of those to whom they wrote. They were inspired leaders, but not spiritual superiors.

Some of the points dealt with in this letter were:

Clause 1. The settled meetings to be kept each first-day. General Meetings, as a rule to be on some other day of the week.

Clause 2. As any are brought in to the Truth new meetings are to be arranged to suit the general convenience without respect of persons.

Clause 3. Persons ceasing to attend meetings are to be spoken to. Persons who walk disorderly are to be spoken to in private, then before two or three witnesses; then, if necessary, the matter is to be reported to the Church. The Church is to reprove them for their disorderly walking, and, if they do not reform, the case is to be sent in writing "to some whom the Lord hath raised up in the power of the Spirit of the Lord to be fathers,—His children to gather in the light" so that the thing may be known to the body and be determined in the light.

[This last clause is specially interesting as showing the method of congregational discipline in the first instance, with an appeal to the leaders in the last resort.]

Clause 4. Ministers to speak the word of the Lord from the mouth of the Lord, without adding or diminishing.

Clause 5. Collections to be made for the poor, the relief of prisoners, and other necessary uses, the moneys to be carefully accounted for, and applied as made known by the overseers in each meeting.

Clause 6. Care to be taken "for the families and goods of such as are called forth in the ministry, or are imprisoned for the Truth's sake; that no creature be lost for want of caretakers."

Clause 12. Needs of widows and fatherless to be supplied :— such as can work and do not to be admonished, and if they refuse to work, neither let them eat

A very similar document was issued two and a-half years later by a meeting of Friends from the four counties of Kent, Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire, held at Bryan Wilkinson's house at Horsham, and signed by forty-four principal Friends from the four counties.

From this we take the following :

Clause 6. Care to be taken of children, wives, servants, soldiers or others, who are turned out of their places and families for the Truth's sake.

Clause 8. (*a*) If any be moved to speak in steeple-houses, streets, markets, meetings or beyond the seas, they are not to quench the Spirit.

(*b*) No Friends to judge one another in meetings, but any advice to be given after meeting in private.

(*c*) Friends to take heed of slothfulness and sleeping in meetings.[1]

Both these documents show us that the Church organization was still of the simplest, and that the experience of the indwelling life of Christ, which had gathered Friends out of the world, was still a living force, powerful enough to hold them together in a common fellowship. Besides the points already mentioned, advice is given as to the solemnization and recording of marriages, recording of births and deaths, and many other practical matters, but there is no mention of Monthly Meetings, and no appeal to

[1] A full abstract of both these letters is given in *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 312–315, from which the above extracts have been taken.

any authority except that of "the Light." It is noteworthy that, although Friends were at this time suffering persecution from the State, the Balby letter advises: "That if any be called to serve the Commonwealth in any public service which is for the public wealth and good, that with cheerfulness it be undertaken and in faithfulness discharged unto God, that therein patterns and examples in the thing that is righteous ye may be to those that are without."

Similar documents were no doubt issued in other parts of the country, and allusions to General Meetings become more frequent as the movement develops. They were usually for Friends from one or more counties, and besides Balby and Horsham we hear of their being held at Cerne in Dorsetshire, Glastonbury, Ringwood, Scalehouse, Skipton and other places. Those at Skipton, in Yorkshire, were the most important. They seem to have been held regularly once a year and were attended by Friends from the six Northern Counties and Cheshire.

The proposal for a General Meeting for the whole country (which we now call the Yearly Meeting) came in the first instance from Durham Friends, in a letter addressed by Durham Monthly Meeting to the General Meeting at Skipton in 1659, in which a series of practical proposals is made with the evident desire to systematize the business arrangements of Friends in the North, and if possible throughout England. Friends representing neighbouring meetings are encouraged to meet together once a month, and Friends from these northern Monthly Meetings to come together two or three times a year in a General Meeting, "and we wish the same may be settled in all parts, and one General Meeting of England." When this letter was read at Skipton in October, it was "by all Friends owned and approved and agreed to be observed, and copies thereof to be sent to all Monthly Meetings," and "as to the particular which concerns a Meeting of some Friends from all the General Meetings of England, it is desired that Anthony Pearson do forthwith write up to George Fox, Edward Burrough and other Friends at London and lay it before them, and if they see fit, appoint a time and place for it." London Friends evidently approved the suggestion, for we find that the meeting was held at Skipton on April 25, 1660, and that it proved a very important one in many ways. It was the earliest Meeting representing the whole body of Friends and the epistle which it issued is remarkable for its missionary zeal, and still rings

out as a challenging ideal to the Church (see quotation, beginning of Chapter XII). George Fox, who was present, gives the following account of the Meeting, written many years later, but W. C. Braithwaite says that it is "less clear than we should like, as he has evidently mixed into it the history of the meeting in previous years." Fox calls it "a General Meeting of men Friends out of many counties concerning the affairs of the Church," and says: "And at this meeting some Friends did come out of most parts of the nation, for it was about the business of the Church both in this nation and beyond the seas. For when I was in the North several years before I was moved to set up that meeting, for many Friends suffered and their goods were spoiled wrongfully contrary to law. And so several Friends that had been justices and magistrates and that did understand the law came there, and was able to inform Friends and to gather up the sufferings that they might be laid before the justices and judges and O.P. [Oliver Protector] and his Parliaments before.

"And this meeting had stood several years: and at this time Friends was well established upon Christ the Foundation and Rock of Ages, and the truth and life and the power of the Lord was over all, and Friends was informed from this meeting to their Monthly and Quarterly Meetings: so this meeting had done its service, and then all was directed to keep to their Monthly and Quarterly Meetings.

"And justices and captains had come to break up this meeting, and then, when they saw Friends' books and accounts of collections concerning the poor, and how that we did take care one county to help another, and took care to help Friends beyond the seas, and that the poor need not trouble their parishes, the justices were made to confess that we did their work: and Friends desired them to come and set with them then. And so they passed away lovingly and commended Friends' practice.

And many times there would be two hundred beggars of the world there, for all the country knew we met about the poor, which after the meeting was done Friends would send to the bakers and give them each a penny loaf apiece, be them as many as would. So we was taught to do good unto all, but especially to the household of faith."

In a paper written by George Fox in 1689 "Concerning our Monthly and Quarterly and Yearly Meetings," he speaks of many

Elders in the Truth coming from Bristol and London, and other places, to the series of Skipton Yearly Meetings, and adds that, in 1661, it was removed thence to London "where it hath been kept ever since, as being looked upon a more convenient place."

The Meeting was in fact held in London, in 1661 as arranged; but owing probably to the difficulties of travel in those years of persecution, we find no further mention of any such meeting until 1668. In April of that year a special meeting of ministers was summoned in London, and this met again at Christmas and issued an epistle which says: "We did conclude among ourselves to settle a meeting, to see one another's faces and open our hearts one to another in the truth of God, once a year, as formerly it used to be." This meeting sat on into 1669 and fixed the next meeting for Easter 1670. Since that time, or as is generally reckoned, since 1668, *the Yearly Meeting* has been regularly held, usually, as Sewel tells us, "in the week called Whitsun-week, because at that time of the year it is commonly best travelling." In June 1671, there was a "mighty meeting" to which many came up from all parts, and a year later it was agreed to form a central body by representation from the counties "to advise about the managing of the public affairs of Friends throughout the nation." Ministers might attend, but no others except the representatives. Each county was to send two Friends, besides six from the City of London, three from Bristol and two from Colchester, which gives us an interesting sidelight on the strength of Quakerism in those places. In 1673 it was decided that, although the yearly Meeting of Ministers should continue, the representative Yearly Meeting should be laid down "till Friends in God's wisdom shall see a further occasion." So, for the next four years, the meeting consisted only of ministers; but in 1677 the representative meeting, on the basis agreed upon in 1673, was set up again, and thenceforth continued to meet year by year at the same time as the Meeting of Ministers.

We thus see that it took ten years for the Yearly Meeting to become regularly established. It was superadded to the system of Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, in order to collect the reports of sufferings, to control the collections and to settle the proportions in which the counties should receive the Quaker books.

A Meeting of this representative character soon became a powerful controlling influence, and was besides of great value in

consolidating the Society. As W. C. Braithwaite says: "To bring together from all parts of the country the men of most weight in the movement, for conference and fellowship and the rekindling of vision, was a true way of developing a corporate life which should carry the Society forward in one common service." From the letter from the Bishopric Monthly Meeting to the General Meeting, held at Skipton, previously quoted, we find that as early as 1659 an organization existed in the North of England, consisting of particular meetings, grouped together in County Monthly Meetings, these again coming together to a General Meeting to be held two or three times in the year. This letter states that each particular meeting is expected to care for its own poor, to find employment for such as want work or "cannot follow their former callings by reason of the evil therein" and to help parents in the education of their children, "that there may not be a beggar amongst us." If a particular meeting is overburdened, the Monthly Meeting is to come to its assistance. The Monthly Meeting is to supply the needs of Friends in the ministry among them, where necessary, and to relieve Friends who are in prison or suffering for Truth's sake, making collections from time to time for these purposes. If a Monthly Meeting is overburdened, the "General Meeting of Friends in the North" is to come to its assistance, "that we may all bear one another's burdens and walk in love as becomes brethren."

The earliest Monthly Meetings of which we find any mention seem to have arisen out of a concern of the "Elders" in Cumberland, who came to Fox at Swarthmore in 1653 and "desired that they might have a Monthly Meeting to look after the poor and to see that all walked according to the truth, etc. . . . and they had a meeting settled there for the same purpose." Soon afterwards, in May 1654, a Monthly Meeting was established for the Durham meetings, and others followed in other districts in the North, for the same general objects.

The organization of Friends in other places, though less fully developed, was largely guided by the example of the strong group of Quaker Churches in the North. None of these meetings were, however, established on a really permanent basis, nor did they attempt to exercise any authority. In the stress of persecution during the Restoration period many of them were discontinued, and when Fox addressed himself seriously to the problems of

Church government in 1666, he found little left on which to build.

In a later chapter we shall have to tell the story of the magnificent stand made by Friends for liberty of conscience under the fierce persecution of the early days of the Restoration; it is only necessary to refer to it here because of the devastating effect which the imprisonment of so many leaders had on the fellowship. In some places the whole Meeting was in prison, with the exception of the children, and it would not have been surprising if Quakerism, with its leadership and organization weakened by persecution, had languished and died. The movement had also suffered from internal troubles. Nayler's extravagancies had caused misunderstandings and divisions in 1656 and the following years, and in 1661–2, the Perrot controversy seriously threatened the unity of Friends.

We shall hear later of the part taken by John Perrot in the wonderful Quaker mission to the East. The fact that he was confined in the madhouse at Rome whilst his friend and co-labourer, John Luffe, was hanged by the Inquisition, shows us, perhaps, that there was something peculiar in his temperament, which may account for his later conduct. He bore his sufferings in Rome with fortitude and even with joy, and the charm of his personality was such that he had great influence among Friends. On his arrival in London in August 1661, after his deliverance, we are told that he "reached, raised and refreshed the life in many, insomuch as the meetings where he was ordered to be was much fresher than lately had been known."

Soon after his return, Perrot published a paper against putting off the hat in prayer, claiming that he had received an "express commandment from the Lord God of Heaven . . . to bear a sure testimony against the custom and tradition." What Fox calls "a comely order" was observed in the meetings of Friends in regard to this and other similar matters. Perrot said that these practices were "customary, traditional ways of worship, never had by commandment from God," and claimed that he had received a new and higher revelation, and even such men as Isaac Penington and young Thomas Ellwood were for a time impressed, and thought that Perrot might be right. It was a critical moment for the Society. Perrot's teaching included the denial of all human arrangements, even for holding meetings at stated times and places,

and would have resulted in the rapid disintegration of Quakerism. Fortunately Perrot soon left England, the strong groups of Friends in the North had been almost untouched by the controversy, and although a few persons became zealous champions of his views, the movement died down, producing indeed a good deal of disaffection, but no open separation.

One result of this controversy was that it made Friends realize the necessity of subordinating individual to corporate judgment, and in 1666 a specially convened meeting of ministers issued an important letter with the object of strengthening government in the Church.

Fox was released from Scarborough Castle in September of this year, having been in prison continuously since January 1664. As soon as he was set at liberty he visited some meetings in Yorkshire and then travelled to London, so benumbed in body that he could hardly mount his horse, and so weak that he could not endure a fire or warm meat, having been so long without them. But no infirmities of body could quench his tireless zeal. He found London devastated by the Great Fire, the Bull and Mouth Meeting House burnt to the ground, and the Quaker fellowship everywhere suffering for want of leadership and organization. It was imperative that something should be done to revive the life of the desolated Church, and with characteristic devotion and simplicity he set about doing it.

As in other crises of his life, Fox was not left without guidance, and he records very simply in his *Journal* for the year 1666: "Then was I moved of the Lord to recommend the setting up of five Monthly Meetings of men and women in the City of London (besides the Women's Meetings and the Quarterly Meetings) to take care of God's glory, and to admonish and exhort such as walked disorderly or carelessly, and not according to Truth. For whereas Friends had had only Quarterly Meetings, now Truth was spread and Friends were grown more numerous I was moved to recommend the setting up of Monthly Meetings throughout the nation. And the Lord showed me what I must do and how the men's and women's Monthly and Quarterly Meetings should be ordered and established in this nation and in other nations: and that I should write to them where I came not, to do the same."

We cannot do better here than quote a few pages from *The*

Second Period of Quakerism, by W. C. Braithwaite on Fox's organizing work. He says :

"It is quite clear that with Fox this organization of Friends into Monthly Meetings, as the district meetings were called, had for its object the release of energy for the service of the Church. It was not, in his view, a step back into earthly things, but a step up into the life and order of the gospel. This is shown by reiterated phrases in his *Journal*, which for convenience I may be allowed to summarize in modern language. In the first place, he saw that true authority in the Church was not of man, but of God. The sovereign power was the power of God. Then it came to him that all the heirs of the gospel, both men and women, inherited its authority, and ought to be entering into their inheritance. It followed naturally that there was a true gospel order in Church affairs—to be exercised by all spiritually-minded Friends met together to wait upon the Lord.

'So they come to inherit and possess the joyful order of the joyful gospel, the comfortable order of the comfortable gospel, and the glorious order of the glorious gospel, and the everlasting order of the everlasting gospel—the power of God which will last for ever and outlast all the orders of the devil and that which is of men or by men.'

"There is a simple directness about the arguments and the conclusions of Fox that may well amaze us. Theories of government in Church and State were the burning issues of the age. But it is most unlikely that he had read or would have cared to read the *Ecclesiastical Polity* of Hooker, or the *Leviathan* of Hobbes. His statesmanship, like that of other prophets, depended upon revelation and moral insight. He felt the lack of authority in the Church, and came to see that it was there all the time, in the highest form, if only those who should be using it rose to their responsibilities. Scarcely able to mount his horse he rode through England, in spite of bodily weakness, with the fervour of an evangelist, because he felt himself to be calling Friends to exercise a glorious order of the gospel which was among the highest of their spiritual prerogatives.

"The work had begun in London in the spring of 1667, and was preceded by an earnest and in the main a successful attempt to restore the unity which had been impaired by the Perrot division. A 'solemn meeting was appointed . . . for a travail in spirit

on behalf of those who had thus gone out,' which held several days, on account of the number who wished, personally or by letter, to condemn their actions. Perrot was now dead, and many whom he had influenced had already forsaken the special practices which he favoured ; so that the meetings were chiefly for confession and reinstatement. They afforded a good illustration of the way in which the gathered Church, using the authority residing in it, would be able to act in matters of discipline. Five Monthly Meetings were now set up in London, in addition to the old Two Weeks' Meeting, begun about 1656, whose jurisdiction now became confined on most matters to the area within the city walls. The early records are only extant in the case of Horslydown, where almost at once cases of discipline occur—marriage by the priest, drunkenness, keeping on the hat in prayer, "going to dig at Banbury for money," running into imaginations and studying astrology, using false measures, playing at ninepins—the medicine for these varied ills consisting in visits even to the fourth and fifth time, and in papers of denial from the parties, which were brought into the meeting, or, in the case of marriages, carried to the priest. At this stage of the discipline and for years after, there was much long-suffering on the part of Friends, and it was only after persistent wrong-doing that 'disownment' took place.

"In the late summer of 1667, Fox began his missionary tour through the country, by the Eastern Counties to Lincoln, which he reached at Christmas ; then through the North Midlands to South Lancashire, whence he sent papers into the Northern Counties and Scotland ; then south through the West Midlands and the borders of Wales to Bristol, where we find him at the end of March 1668. Here the word of the Lord came to him to go back to London ; and on his arrival he took steps to strengthen the marriage procedure of Friends, and also secured the establishment of two schools, one for children at Waltham Abbey, and one at Shacklewell, 'set up to instruct young lasses and maidens in whatsoever things was civil and useful in the creation.'

"Both these important developments were germane to the work in hand. It was inevitable that the fresh sense of authority in the Church should assert itself to bring marriages under the direct care of the Monthly Meetings, nor could group-consciousness be better promoted than by the institution of schools for

Friends' children, where the atmosphere and ethical standards would foster the Quaker way of life.

"Fox resumed his travels early in May, and before the end of the year had visited the remaining counties in the South and West of England. In one naïve passage he tells us how the settlement of meetings in which all might take care of God's glory and admonish those who walked contrary to it, made the very Justices say that 'never such a man came into their country, that had reconciled neighbour to neighbour, and husband to wife, and turned many people from their loose lives.' 'And indeed,' he adds, 'these meetings did make a great reformation amongst people.'

"There was opposition in some places to the new arrangements, and at Minehead in June he had forebodings one night that a dark spirit was abroad, striving to get up to disturb the Church. Fox, however, had force of personality to carry through his great work, and though some must have disliked it from the first, the immediate benefits of the system disarmed for a time the hostility which afterwards asserted itself in what is known as the Wilkinson-Story separation. The crown of his labours was found in meetings held in London at the end of the year, first, for setting up again the annual meeting of ministers, which we last heard of in 1661, and, secondly, for recovering Friends led astray by the Perrot spirit. A letter to the counties . . . says: 'Here hath been several blessed meetings which hath restored many that have been long out' . . . and for the time Friends felt themselves again united into one soul and one mind." [1]

Fox not only travelled all through England establishing these meetings, but also went to Ireland in 1669 on the same mission. Here he had the warm support of William Edmondson, the apostle of Irish Quakerism, who, we are told, promoted the new system with joy, since "this gave every faithful Friend a share of the burden."

Warrants were out against Fox, describing his hair, his hat, his clothes, and his horse, but he went forward with his usual fearlessness and unconcern and escaped them all, making, to use his own phrases, "a gallant visitation" to persons of "a gallant spirit, worthy to be visited." At Cork he tells us, "the power of the Lord was so great that Friends in the power and Spirit of

[1] *The Second Period of Quakerism*, pp. 252–255.

the Lord, brake out into singing many together with an audible voice, making melody in their hearts."

Fox had always recognized the equality of men and women in spiritual privilege and responsibility, and, following his leadership, Friends accepted to the full the great truth that "in Christ Jesus, there can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female." They found abundant support for their view in the Scriptures, and felt convinced that it was never intended that either a separated clergy or a privileged sex was to monopolize any of the gifts of the Spirit.

From the beginning of the movement women had taken an important part in publishing the Quaker message, and had bravely borne their share of persecution. Elizabeth Hooton, of Skegby, in Nottinghamshire was among the first to be convinced by Fox, and she became a notable minister. The name of Margaret Fell will be honoured as long as Quakerism lives, for her fostering, motherly care during its early years, and for the influence of her home and her personality upon its development. The work in London and at the Universities was begun by women; they were the first to reach Massachusetts, and the great Quaker mission to the East must always be associated with the names of Mary Fisher and Katharine Evans.

The earliest Women's Meetings which we hear of were started in London about 1656, viz., the Box Meeting and the Two Weeks' Meeting. The Box Meeting collected money for poor relief in a box, and seems to have begun with the direct encouragement of Fox. It met once a week and was accountable to no other body. The Two Weeks' Meeting was set on foot a little later by the Men's Meeting to help them in visiting the sick, the prisoners and the poor. It also took in hand the finding of places for maid-servants who were Friends, endeavoured to reclaim any who had gone astray, and to stop false reports, and also dealt with those who married non-Friends.

This Women's Two-Weeks' Meeting, which grew up in co-operation with the Men's Meeting, became a model for other Women's Meetings later on. Some people have thought that the object of the separate Women's Meetings was to give women some share in the Church government, but not equal powers with the men; but, although the arrangement does, in fact, seem to have had this effect, it is clear that this was not Fox's intention. His

one concern was to give women their right place of service in the Church and to stir them up to take it. It was a bold venture, and so far ahead of the thought of the times that we cannot be surprised that many women held back and were unwilling to take up their responsibilities, nor that those who responded to the call were subjected to severe criticism.

In 1676, George Fox wrote a long letter from Swarthmore to those who objected to Women's Meetings, and in the same year he sent out "An encouragement to all the Women's Meetings in the world." The latter contained an exhaustive series of references, taken from the Bible, to show the worthy part taken by women, "till Noah's time," and all through the time of the law and the prophets and on to gospel days. "In the time of the law," he says, "there were the assemblies of the women that were wise of heart to help in the work of the tabernacle, and Moses and Aaron and the seventy elders did not say to them: 'We can do our work ourselves, and you are more fitter to be at home to wash the dishes,' or such like expressions; but they did encourage them in the work and service of God."

In all these labours Fox's great concern was to strengthen government in the Church by laying the burden of it, both as a privilege and a responsibility upon the whole body of honest-hearted Friends. Women as well as men were to have their place of service, and the central control of the Society was to be divided amongst a number of important representative bodies which were to meet in London, and of which the principal were, the Yearly Meeting, the Morning Meeting, and the Meeting for Sufferings.

We have already traced the gradual development of *The Yearly Meeting.*

The Morning Meeting originated in 1673. Travelling ministers had been in the habit of meeting at Gerard Roberts's house in London every First-day morning for the purpose of keeping in touch with one another, and also of letting it be known which meeting each one felt called upon to attend. At George Fox's suggestion, they now agreed to meet every Second-day morning for supervising books and for distributing ministers amongst the London Meetings. This Meeting, which later included others besides ministers, continued to meet until 1901, and played an important part in the control of the Quaker message, whether

spoken or written. It directed that two of a sort of all books written by Friends were to be procured and kept together, and thus formed the beginning of the unique collection of Quaker literature in the Friends' Reference Library at Devonshire House, and the discussions over the books, though apt to be too controversial, still helped to keep Quaker thought fresh and active, and served as an intellectual stimulus to those who attended.

The Meeting for Sufferings, which now meets in London on the first Friday in every month, and is the standing executive body of the Society of Friends in England, first came into existence about 1675 in the form of a vigilance committee, consisting of London Friends, appointed to correspond with the counties, and at least one Friend from each county, who should be prepared to attend when required. As its name indicates, its special duties were in connection with the sufferings of Friends, especially to draw up instances of severe sufferings to be laid before Parliament, and to prepare "Books of Sufferings." Friends could not resist evil by evil, but neither could they condone cruelty and injustice by cowardly silence. It was their duty to expose oppression and to try to arouse the slumbering consciences of their persecutors by bringing their deeds into the light of day. This vigilance committee was to meet before each Law Term, and in the intervals, one-fourth of the London members, by turns, were to meet weekly to attend to pressing matters. They kept in touch with the country meetings by means of the correspondents, and it was probably the truly representative character of its constitution that led to this "Meeting for Sufferings" becoming such an important Executive body. The Yearly Meeting of 1679 directed that the expenses incident to waiting upon King and Council, Courts and Parliament, about the national sufferings should be paid out of the general collection from the counties, but "only as shall be agreed and directed by the weekly Meeting for Sufferings in London and not any other." This direction came to be treated as conferring control over all expenditure. The printing and distribution of books was also placed under the care of the Meeting for Sufferings, but without interfering with the revising functions of the Morning Meeting.

The basis of authority in all arrangements for Church government in the Society of Friends is well expressed by the Yearly Meeting of Ministers in 1676, as being "The Power of God"

exercised through "all the faithful men and women in every city, country, and nation, whose faith stands in the Power of God, the Gospel of Christ, and . . . they have all right to the power of the meetings, for they be heirs of the Power and the authority of the men's and women's meetings." Business was, therefore, to be transacted in an atmosphere of worship, and the chief concern of every business meeting was to find out the mind of the Lord on the matter in hand and to be guided by that, rather than by rhetorical arguments, or by the usual methods of voting or a show of hands. "Friends," wrote Fox, "are not to meet like a company of people about town or parish business, neither in their men's nor women's meetings, but to wait upon the Lord."

This method of conducting business meetings has been continued from Fox's time down to the present day and it has been proved that the willingness to *wait* for the guidance of the Spirit, when Friends cannot at once come to a decision, results again and again in a wonderful degree of unanimity, even when at first it seemed almost impossible that the various views represented could be reconciled. It sometimes entails a delay in forward movements out of deference to the more conservative or cautious Friends, but it ensures practically united action and avoids the bitterness which is often felt where a majority over-rides the wishes or prejudices of a few. The duty of summing up, or taking "the sense of the meeting" (which with Friends takes the place of a show of hands), rests with the Clerk, who is appointed by the meeting and whose decisions are very rarely questioned.

It is sincerely to be hoped that Friends will never depart from this practice, but that they will seek continually to carry out the wise council of Edward Burrough that "being orderly come together," they should not "spend time with needless, unnecessary and fruitless discourses; but proceed in the wisdom of God . . . not deciding affairs by the greater vote or the number of men . . . but in the wisdom, love and fellowship of God, in gravity, patience, meekness, in unity and concord submitting one to another in lowliness of heart . . . hearing and determining every matter in love, coolness, gentleness and dear unity." [1]

By means of these central and local organizations the Quaker movement had now become crystallized into a religious Society, but the change had not been carried out without opposition.

[1] *Letters of Early Friends*, p. 305.

Many who had been attracted to Quakerism by the individualistic teaching of the early Friends maintained that in matters of faith and discipline all God's people ought to be left to the guidance of His Spirit and Truth in their own hearts, and that no meeting had a right to judge individuals or to settle disputes between them. For a group of meetings to order an individual meeting to take any definite line of action was also, in their opinion, a breach of Christian liberty. They objected, in fact, to any system of Church organization, as limiting the freedom of the Spirit.

Several prominent ministers joined the party of opposition, the two leaders being John Wilkinson and John Story, of Preston Patrick in Westmorland, who, for many years, had laboured together in Wiltshire and the West of England. T. E. Harvey summarizes their objections to the newly established discipline as follows :—

"Their bitterest opposition seems to have been to the setting up of women's Meetings, which they considered a 'monstrous' and unheard-of innovation. They opposed any disciplinary action being taken against Friends who went to be married by a clergyman, or those who paid tithes, and were only willing to allow of the use of Monthly and General Meetings in so far as they were informal gatherings attended by those who felt free so to do, their recommendations being only followed where individual meetings could unite with the proposals. They also recommended Friends to meet in secret, in order to avoid persecution, and were in favour of the closing of Meeting-houses, where needful or expedient. They disliked the provision of money to assist travelling ministers in their journeys abroad, and evidently sympathized with the Quietist ideal of worship, for we find the complaint made against them that they objected to a congregation giving outward utterance in its feelings, and tried to suppress 'groanings, sighings, soundings, and singings.'" [1]

With these questions of principle, we, unfortunately, find mixed up a great deal of jealousy of George Fox's influence as a leader, so much so, that the new discipline was represented by some as an attempt to set up a hierarchy with Fox as president and law-giver, controlling all.

Repeated efforts were made to bring about a reconciliation and mutual understanding, but with very little success; and in 1676

[1] *The Rise of the Quakers*, p. 157.

the two leaders with their followers seceded from their own meeting and then travelled up and down the country persuading others to join them.

The places most affected were Westmorland, the home county of the leaders, and Bristol and Wiltshire, the scenes of their ministerial labours; but the effects of the schism disturbed the whole Society and lasted for many years.

Story died in 1681, and Wilkinson a few years later, both of them without having returned to unity with Friends. Left without any strong leadership the schism wore itself out, and by the end of the century had practically ceased to exist; but its results were far-reaching, and it must certainly be counted among the forces which helped to shape the more cautious and self-centred type of Quakerism, which became prevalent in the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER XII

THE FIRST QUAKER MISSIONARIES

"Every one to the ministry yourselves, which is the Seed, Christ; for England is as a family of prophets, which must spread over all the nations; as a garden of plants, and the place where the pearl is found which must enrich all nations with the heavenly treasure, out of which shall the waters of life flow and water all the thirsty ground; and out of which nation and dominion must go the spiritually-weaponed and armed men to fight and conquer all nations, and bring them to the nation of God, that the Lord may be known to be the living God of nations, and His Son to reign, and His people [to be] one."—Epistle from Skipton General Meeting, April 25, 1660.

This sentence from the epistle of Skipton General Meeting in 1660 carries us back to the time when the missionary zeal of the early Friends was at high-water mark, and a minute of the same meeting gives us a wonderful idea of the wide range covered by their activities. It says: "We have received certain information from some Friends of London of the great work and service of the Lord beyond the seas, in several parts and regions, as Germany, America, Virginia, and many other places, as Florence, Mantua, Palatine, Tuscany, Italy, Rome, Turkey, Jerusalem, France, Geneva, Norway, Barbados, Bermuda, Antigua, Jamaica, Surinam, Newfoundland, through all which Friends have passed in the service of the Lord, and divers other places, countries, islands and nations, and over and among many nations of the Indians, in which they have had service for the Lord and have published His name and declared the everlasting Gospel of peace unto them that have been afar off, that they might be brought nigh unto God."

The very wording of this minute shows us that these first missionaries had a very limited knowledge of the geography and conditions of the countries visited, and we know that they were often quite ignorant of the language, and yet such was the constraining power of the love of Christ in their hearts that

they despised difficulties and hardships, and even death itself, in their eagerness to obey the call of the Spirit and to carry the glad tidings of the Gospel to those who had not heard it.

In May 1655, Howgill had written of some young London Friends with "movings" for Barbados, and of Stubbs and Caton having movings for Holland. In June Caton visited Calais, and then planned with Stubbs a short journey to Holland. On landing at Flushing in September, they were moved by the power of the Lord "to publish His eternal truth in and through the streets, whether they could understand or no." They visited Middleburg and Rotterdam, and Caton writes: "Alas! how we did suffer for want of a good interpreter." In 1656, William Ames, who knew a little Dutch, spent ten weeks in Holland, and Stubbs was there again for a month. They had a "precious memorable meeting at Amsterdam," and a silent meeting was begun at Rotterdam, and a number of persons were convinced.

The Dutch Republic had been founded on a basis of toleration, and had become a place of refuge for the persecuted of all sects. This had made it a nursery for the many new religious ideas, which were at this time influencing the spiritual life of Europe. In an earlier chapter of this book we have seen how the Quaker movement itself was related to some of these, notably to that of the Collegiants. Amsterdam was then one of the greatest cities in Europe, but amongst its many sects, although the Quaker Publishers found a ready welcome, they did not at first attract many persons of well-balanced minds, but rather those who were inclined to novelties. The soil was not stony, as in Ireland and Scotland, but there was no depth of earth and the results were short-lived. Nayler's extravagant conduct had caused strange reports to be spread everywhere about the Quakers, and when Ames paid a second visit in 1657 he found the magistrates stirred out of their usual tolerance, and he and the Friend who was with him were soon commanded to leave the city. The visit, however, resulted in the convincement of Jacob Sewel and his wife Judith Zinspenning, the parents of the Quaker historian.

"They," he says, "with two or three more, were the first orthodox Quakers in Amsterdam, orthodox, I say, because I very well remember what a strange and odd sort of people about

that time did flock to the Quakers in this country." Both Caton and Ames spent a good deal of time in Holland, shepherding the infant Church, most of whose recruits were drawn from the Mennonite and Collegiant fellowships.

In 1659 Caton paid a fourth visit to Holland, and as he had now learned the language, he had good service. He found Friends well settled, and the meetings held in good order. The chief centre in Holland was Amsterdam, but there were also a Quaker group at Rotterdam, a "little flock" at Leyden, and meetings at Haarlem and Alkmaar. The chief minister amongst the Dutch Friends at this time was Judith Zinspenning. She had been a Baptist, and even in her girlhood had taken such a keen interest in sermons that her father is reported to have said that he wished she were a boy, that she might become a preacher. The Collegiants, on one occasion, allowed her to address a meeting, saying: "It is true, friend, we do not allow women to speak in the Church, yet we bear that respect to you that we give you the liberty of speaking." She often visited the outlying meetings, and her death in 1664 was a heavy loss to Dutch Friends.

The establishment of Quakerism in Holland provided a base from which work could be undertaken in the other countries of Protestant Europe. In 1657 Ames and George Rofe visited Griesheim in the Palatinate, near Worms, a village which was a Mennonite centre. Some persons were convinced, but the rabble became so excited against Friends that the authorities forbade anyone to entertain them; so they lodged in barns and stables, until Ames obtained an interview with the Prince Elector, who received them favourably and gave liberty to Friends to travel and reside in his country. The Princess Elisabeth, who was a disciple of Descartes, and the future friend of Penn and Barclay, was at this time living at the court at Heidelberg, and now came into touch with Friends for the first time.

The Quaker group at Griesheim were persecuted for refusing to bear arms, or to pay tithes, much in the same way as Friends in England. Most of them were vine growers, and when Caton and Ames visited them in 1661, they stayed some time, helping them to gather their grapes. In 1686 the whole meeting removed to the Germantown settlement in Pennsylvania,

where they had the honour of joining in the first great protest made by a religious body against slavery.

Ames travelled widely in other parts of Germany. We hear of him in Friesland, Hamburg, Bohemia, Brandenburg, Danzig, and Poland. This pioneer work did not at first have much result, though a few years later a meeting was begun at Embden, in East Friesland, and a few persons were convinced in Hamburg. In August 1661, Fox wrote to Friends: "In Holland and Germany, and other parts that way, Truth spreads and hath a good report."

Sixteen years later, when Fox himself visited the groups of Friends in Holland and some parts of Germany, a system of Church government was established with a Yearly Meeting at Amsterdam, but we cannot estimate the influence of Quakerism in these countries by the numbers of its adherents, for there were many, especially amongst the Mennonites and the Collegiants, who accepted the Quaker teaching without leaving the religious fellowships to which they belonged.

William Penn, Robert Barclay, George Keith and his wife with three other Friends, accompanied George Fox on this visit to Holland, as well as his wife's daughter, Isabel Yeamans, and when again in 1684 he "had drawings in Spirit to go into Holland, to visit the Seed of God there," Alexander Parker, George Watts, and Nathaniel Brassey went with him, and these, as well as some others, seem to have paid quite frequent visits to the Dutch and German Friends. Steven Crisp, of Colchester, as we have already noted,[1] learnt Dutch on purpose to be of service to Friends in Holland, whom he frequently visited, proving himself a worthy successor to Ames and Caton, the founders of Dutch Quakerism.

We must now turn to the less fruitful, but more adventurous journeys made by these enthusiastic missionaries to more distant Eastern lands. The first party set off in 1657, hoping to reach Turkey, where their ambition was to convert the Sultan, and then to preach the Gospel to the Jews at Jerusalem itself. The party consisted of three Irishmen, John Perrot, John Luffe and John Buckley; and three women, Mary Fisher, Mary Prince, and Beatrice Beckly. They went first to Leghorn, where they had free service for about a fortnight among English, Jews and

[1] See ante, chap. vii.

Roman Catholics. At Smyrna the English Consul, although kindly, discouraged their mission, which naturally appeared to him visionary and full of danger, and he insisted on starting them homewards in a vessel bound for Venice. They were not, however, to be so easily discouraged, and bad weather compelling the ship to put in at Zante, John Buckley, Mary Fisher, and Beatrice Beckly at once landed, so as "to pass into the Morea again into Turkey . . . to go toward Adrianople, where we hear the Turk's Emperor lies with his army, being, as is supposed, six days' journey from the place where they may land." We next hear of them at Constantinople, where the English ambassador writes under date July 24th: "Nor are all our troubles from without us: some are, as I may say, from amongst us and within us, occasioned by a generation of people crept in unawares called Quakers, three whereof not long since arrived here from Zante by way of the Morea. . . . I friendly warned them to return, which the two women did quietly, but John Buckley refusing, I was constrained to ship him hence upon the *Lewis*."

It seems likely that before reaching Constantinople, Mary Fisher had already succeeded in carrying her message to the Sultan. The details are difficult to follow, but all the accounts agree that she went forward to Adrianople quite alone. She must have travelled on foot along the coast of Greece, through Macedonia, and over the mountains of Thrace, until she reached the beautiful plain on which Adrianople stands. Sultan Mahommed IV was a young man of seventeen, whose father had attempted to kill him when an infant in a fit of blind rage against the ladies of his harem. He had escaped with his life, but was deformed and weakly, although devoted to the pleasures of the chase. When his Vizier told him that an English woman had come to the camp at Adrianople with a message for him from the great God, he gave directions that she should be received with the honours of an ambassador, and an interview was arranged for the following day.

So Mary Fisher, in her simple Quaker dress, was ushered into the presence of the Grand Turk as he sat in state surrounded by his great men, in their many-coloured robes, with a profusion of gold embroidery and all the splendours of an Eastern court. She stood for a few moments in silence "weightily

pondering what she might say." The Sultan, thinking that she was dazzled and overwhelmed by all the magnificence around her, spoke graciously to her, asking whether it was true that she had something from the Lord God to say to him, and when she answered: "Yea," he bade her "speak the word of the Lord to them and not to fear, for they had good hearts and could bear it." "Then," the account continues, "she spake what was upon her mind."

She was listened to with great respect and attention, and the Sultan said that what she had spoken was the truth. Then he desired her to stay in that country, for he said they could not but respect one who had taken such pains to come so far to give them a message from the Lord God. When she declined, he offered her a guard to bring her back to Constantinople, for he said it was dangerous travelling, and he should not like harm to befall her in his dominions. She declined this offer also, and travelling as she had come, alone, safely reached Constantinople "without the least hurt or scoff. And so she returned safe to England."

Meanwhile Perrot and Luffe had reached Venice, where Perrot had an audience with the Doge and gave him some books. They then proceeded to Rome, and there were betrayed to the Inquisition by the English college of Jesuits, because of the testimony they bore against the idolatry of the Pope, and his cardinals, the Jesuits, priests and friars. Luffe was examined before Pope Alexander VII and afterwards hanged. He is reported to have said to the Pope: "Thou pretendest to sit in Peter's chair; now know that Peter had no chair, but a boat; Peter was a fisher, thou art a prince; Peter fasted and prayed, thou farest deliciously and sleepest softly; he was mean in attire, thou art beset with ornaments and gay attire; he fished for men to convert them, thou hookest souls to confound them; he was a friend and disciple to Christ, thou art indeed Anti-Christ."

John Perrot, who was of a very imaginative temperament, was thought by the inquisitors to be mad, and so escaped the fate of his friend. He was confined in a madhouse for some years, and during this time wrote a number of letters to Friends in Ireland, beginning: "I, John, a servant and disciple of Immanuel, God with us." These letters are mostly in mystical

and apocalyptic language, and W. C. Braithwaite says of them : "I know nothing like them in early Quaker literature. They glow with the fires of a mystical love which unites him in his prison of madmen to his absent Friends." On his release and return to England, he carried the Quaker revolt against traditional ways of worship to such an extreme that he objected to the taking off of the hat in prayer and even to meeting for worship at stated times, and became, as we have seen in an earlier chapter, a cause of great trouble to Friends. William Penn writes of "John Perrot, who, if he had been as faithful as his companion, might with him have been hanged at Rome . . to his own comfort, the Truth's honour, and the Church's peace" !

This mission to Turkey and Palestine, although it was the chief, was by no means the only one undertaken by Friends to the East. One of the most heroic adventures was the journey of George Robinson, a young man of London, who in the autumn of 1657 "felt a motion to travel to Jerusalem," and in the course of his journeyings had many hairbreadth escapes, both from the Turks and the Friars, and also from a band of robbers, but was brought safely through all. In the end, being asked by the Turkish authorities the cause of his coming to Jerusalem, he got the opportunity he had been waiting for to give his message, and told them that "it was by the command of the Lord God of heaven and earth he came thither ; and that the great and tender love of God was made manifest in visiting them ; His compassionate mercies being such, that He would gather them in this the day of His gathering." Having thus cleared his conscience, he was willing to leave the city, and so returned home in safety. Other Friends attempted to reach Jerusalem, but it seems doubtful whether any of them were successful. The English Consuls regarded them as futile and dangerous visionaries, who ought to be headed back at every opportunity, and at the Roman Catholic ports they ran the serious risk of falling into the hands of the Inquisition.

Early in 1658, John Stubbs and Samuel Fisher, after visiting Friends in the Palatinate, went on towards Rome. On their way they spent two months in Venice, publishing the Quaker message, by writing and by word of mouth, among Turks, Jews, Indians, Papists and Protestants, and found some

who were willing to hear them, especially among the Jews. In Rome they stayed a month, distributing books to the Friars and testifying against the Popish superstitions, yet they returned home unmolested to England.

The next year, 1659, Katharine Evans and Sarah Chevers set out for Alexandria and Jerusalem. Katharine Evans was a woman of indomitable courage, who had already visited places closed against Quakers, such as the Isle of Wight and the Isle of Man, and who believed that the Lord would give her the victory wherever she went. At Leghorn they got passage in a Dutch ship, which touched at Malta, then in the hands of the Knights of St. John. Here they landed and declared their message, but on going ashore a second time, they were examined by the Inquisitor, and detained in the island. After being confined for some time in the Consul's house, they were put into an inner room in the Inquisition, "which," they say, "had but two little holes in it for light or air, but the glory of the Lord did shine round about us." Here they were kept in close confinement for three and a-half years, suffering untold hardships and privations, almost suffocated for want of air, often ill for weeks together, persecuted almost daily by the Friars to make them change their religion, many times expecting daily to be led out to death, and at last separated from one another, which they felt to be the hardest trial of all. They remained steadfast in their faith, declaring their message to all who came within the sound of their voices, and, as Katharine Evans wrote, never regretting even in the darkest hours that they had obeyed the voice which bade them come. She says: "O the ravishment, the raptures, the glorious bright shining countenance of the Lord our God, which is our fulness in emptiness, our strength in weakness, our health in sickness, our life in death, our joy in sorrow, our peace in disquietness, our praise in heaviness, our power in all needs and necessities."

In 1661 Daniel Baker went to Malta determined to secure their release. He obtained an interview with the Lord Inquisitor, who promised to set them free on payment of 4,000 dollars and their promise never to come into those parts again, but this promise they did not feel free to give, not knowing what the Lord might require of them. Daniel Baker then offered to be imprisoned in their stead, and this not being accepted, he

even offered "to lay down his life for their liberty, if it was not to be purchased otherwise." All these offers were refused, but the knowledge of his devoted friendship brought great comfort to their hearts, and a little later, through other influences, the two Friends were at length liberated and free to return home. In a letter to her husband just after Daniel Baker's visit, Katharine Evans tells of his efforts on their behalf. "The Lord," she writes, "will restore into his bosom double; his service can never be blotted out; his name is Daniel Baker; his outward being is near London—a right dear and precious heart he is," and then she sums up their spiritual experiences in the memorable words: "The deeper the sorrow, the greater the joy; the heavier the cross, the weightier the crown."

D. Baker had started in the spring of 1661, with John Stubbs, Henry Fell and Richard Scosthrop, who were moved to go "towards China and Prester John's country." No shipmaster could, however, be found willing to carry them, so they were obliged to be content with embarking for Alexandria, intending to complete the journey by caravan. They carried with them letters from Fox, mostly in Latin and English, to the King of Spain, the King of France, the magistrates of Malta, the Turk, the Emperor of China, Prester John, and finally one addressed: "To all the nations under the whole heavens." There was also a letter from Stubbs and Fell in Latin and English to Prester John, a mysterious personage, at this time identified with the Christian King of Ethiopia. They write as two apostles sent out to visit God's vineyard in all nations, sure that the Kingdom of Heaven must be known in all, though it may be only as a grain of mustard-seed. From Leghorn, Stubbs and Fell passed on to Alexandria, but were promptly shipped back to Leghorn, with directions to the English there not to allow any more Quakers to embark for Egypt. The English Consul at Cairo reported that they "did throw pamphlets about the streets in Hebrew, Arabic and Latin, and if they had stayed a little longer it might have set them a-burning." From Leghorn they travelled, probably on foot, thirty-two days into Germany, and were greatly cheered to find Caton at Heidelberg in the friendly atmosphere of the Palatinate. Baker and Scosthrop meanwhile had gone eastwards towards Constantinople, but were shipped back from Smyrna in the same

ship by which they had come. At Zante, Scosthrop fell ill and died. Baker went on to Italy and thence to Malta, where he made the attempt already related to secure the release of Katharine Evans and Sarah Chevers. Having failed in this, he continued his voyage home, but was wind-bound for a month in the Straits of Gibraltar. Whilst waiting there, he felt it laid upon him to go ashore, and, at the peril of his life, be made a sign against the idolatry of the Church of Rome. The service seemed so difficult that, like Jonah, he was tempted to flee from it, but being at last made willing, he asked the captain to put him ashore, which he did upon the day called Maundy Thursday. On reaching Gibraltar, then a Spanish town, he went into the church and found the priest at the high altar on his knees worshipping the Host. Thereupon "the indignation of God kindled in his heart against it; and turning his back upon the priest and his dead God, he set his face towards the people, and saw the multitude upon their knees also, worshipping they knew not what. In this posture, spreading forth his arms, he slipped off his upper garment, and rent it from top to bottom in divers pieces, which he cast from him with indignation; then he took his hat from off his head, as being the uppermost covering of man, and, casting it down, stamped upon it with his feet, and appearing in sackcloth covering, he, with a loud voice, thrice sounded repentance, and said that the life of Christ and His saints was arisen from the dead. And so he passed away unmolested, sounding the same message with repentance through the streets till he came to the seaside, where he kneeled down to pray, and gave thanks to the Lord for his wonderful preservation and that He had suffered no man to touch or do him any harm."

In spite of the heroism and perseverance of the messengers, these various Eastern missions left almost no result. The cost of the journeys was very great, not only in money, but in life and health and spiritual vigour. It would have needed a knowledge and understanding of conditions beyond the powers of the Publishers of Truth to present Quakerism in a way which would reach the consciences of the Mohammedans and the Latin races of the Mediterranean shores, but these visits are a remarkable evidence of the high claims made for the Quaker message, and must have been to those visited "a sign," as

W. C. Braithwaite expresses it, "of some great but mysterious Divine working, which evidenced itself in the courage and pertinacity of those who pressed through every danger, even to Jerusalem, or into the presence of the Sultan, and in the endurance which overcame even the rigours of the pitiless Inquisition." [1]

The vigorous missionary activity of these few years was checked by the storm of persecution which broke over the Society soon after the Restoration. Organization was paralysed, most of the ministers were in prison, and Friends needed all their strength to fight that grand battle for religious liberty at home in which they were called to be the leaders. Afterwards, as the century drew to a close, the Quietist spirit began to replace the fresh enthusiasm of the early days. With the passing of the Toleration Act in 1689, Friends were secured from open persecution, and in the lull after the storm, they were more concerned with preserving their own quiet way of life than with spreading their message. Moreover, by this time, there were many who had been born into the Quaker fellowship, with whom the acceptance of rules of conduct approved by the Church took the place of a living experience. The Society gradually became self-centred and introspective, and lost its world-wide vision. Here and there some man or woman with a Christ-like love for souls and a spiritual ear, sensitive to the divine voice, would hear a call to carry the Gospel message to distant lands; but these were only isolated efforts, and, as a Society, it was nearly two hundred years before Friends again made any united attempt to preach the Gospel to those who had not heard its joyful sound.

[1] *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 433.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PLANTING OF QUAKERISM IN AMERICA

"Friends felt, as their own testimony plainly shows, that they were not solitary adventurers, but that God was pushing them out to be the bearers of a new and mighty word of Life which was to remake the world, and that the whole group behind them was in some sense embodied in them. Throughout all the years during which the campaign of spiritual conquest was being pushed forward, the entire Society in England was pledged to the task of carrying its 'truth' into the life of the New World, and even as early as 1660 George Fox was planning for the founding of a Colony in America, where Quakers could try their faith and work out their ideals unmolested. A study of Fox's printed *Epistles* will convince any one that the 'Seed in America' was always prominent in his thought and in his plans. In fact no other religious body in the Old World more completely identified itself with the fortunes of its apostles in the New World than did the Quakers, then in the youth and vigour of their career."—Dr. Rufus M. Jones, *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, Introduction, pp. xiii–xiv.

Although the missionary efforts of Friends in Eastern lands were so barren of results, their messengers to the Western world were enabled, in the midst of sufferings and persecution, to plant seed which has borne a rich and abundant harvest. The whole story is well told in *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, by Dr. Rufus M. Jones and others, to which we would refer our readers, as we cannot here give more than a bare outline.

Two points, both of them essential to a right understanding of the whole Quaker movement, are brought out in this history. 1. The way in which Quakerism could develop in an atmosphere of religious freedom, as in Rhode Island, the Jerseys and Pennsylvania. 2. The fundamental conflict between Quakerism and Calvinism, which, owing to the Restoration, was never fought to a finish in England, but which we see carried on to a final issue in Massachusetts. The fact that Quakerism won the day had far-reaching consequences for the future.

In the New England colonies, as in the mother country, there were scattered up and down little groups of those who were dissatisfied with the mere outward forms of religion and were longing for something more real and soul-satisfying, and these everywhere received the Quaker message joyfully.

As early as 1655 two women Friends, Mary Fisher and Ann Austin, landed in Barbados, and, after spending six months in publishing their message there, proceeded to Boston. Barbados had been occupied by the English since 1605, and was now a prosperous sugar-growing colony with about 25,000 inhabitants and not less than 10,000 slaves. It was looked upon as the port of entry for the colonies, and we find that Friends wishing to reach any part of the American coast usually sailed for Barbados and then reshipped after propagating their views in the island, and often also paying visits to Jamaica, Antigua, Nevis or Bermuda. Friends' meetings rapidly sprang up in all these islands, and even on the occasion of their first visit, Mary Fisher wrote home: "Here is many convinced and many desire to know the way." Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Rous, a wealthy sugar planter, and his son John, who afterwards married young Margaret Fell, were the first to join the movement, and Barbados quickly became a veritable hive of Quakerism, with as many as five Meeting Houses.

At this time the other American colonies were Plymouth, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, which were in close touch with the Commonwealth authorities; New Amsterdam, afterwards called New York, which was in the hands of the Dutch until 1664; and, further south, the old colony of Virginia and newly founded Maryland, which were more Royalist in sentiment.

In July 1656 the two Friends left Barbados and arrived in Boston harbour. The Massachusetts authorities had been prejudiced against Friends by some violent anti-Quaker pamphlets and by adverse rumours which had preceded their arrival, and the two women were at once thrown into prison, on the sole charge of being Quakers. They were deprived of light and of writing materials; no one was allowed to speak to them under penalty of a fine of five pounds, and all their books were publicly burned. At the end of five weeks they were sent back to Barbados, but two days after they sailed out of Boston

harbour, a ship carrying eight more of the Quaker Publishers came in. They received practically the same treatment, and after eleven weeks the master of the vessel which had brought them over was compelled, much against his will, to carry them back to England, under a bond of £500, and a law was passed forbidding masters of ships to bring any Quakers to New England. In spite of all these precautions, the Quaker message seems to have reached at least one heart. An old man named Nicolas Upsall was interested and impressed with the report of their doctrines and tried to save their books from the flames. When he heard that Mary Fisher and Ann Austin were being starved in prison, he induced the gaoler to let him feed them by paying him five shillings a week. Later on he was bold enough to defend them publicly, whereupon he was fined £20 and banished from the colony. In Rhode Island he met with an Indian chief who, on hearing his story, called him "friend" and offered to build him "a warm house," commenting with true insight on the old man's persecutors: "What a God have the English, who deal so with one another about their God!"

The increasingly severe laws against the Quakers seem only to have fanned the ardour of their missionary zeal, for the very next year we hear that six of these banished Friends, together with five others, who felt the same call, believed it right to go again to New England, "being firmly persuaded that the Lord had called them to bear testimony to His Truth in these parts, and having a full assurance of faith that He would support them through whatsoever exercises He should be pleased to suffer them to be tried with." Such severe penalties had, however, been imposed on the master of any ship who should land Quakers on the shores of New England, that no one could be found willing to take them.

Whilst these eleven Friends were eagerly awaiting some means of passage, Robert Fowler, of Bridlington, who had felt it "laid upon him" to build a ship "in the cause of Truth," brought her up to London. As he was building her, New England had been "presented" before him, and when Gerrard Roberts, who had been vainly trying to find a vessel, heard the story, all recognized the guiding hand of the Lord and accepted the "providential ship," although she was by human standards much too small for ocean service.

Robert Fowler's own account of this remarkable voyage is printed in Bowden's *History of Friends in America*, and is entitled: "A true relation of the voyage undertaken by me, Robert Fowler, with my small vessel called the *Woodhouse*, but performed by the Lord, like as He did Noah's Ark, wherein he shut up a few righteous persons and landed them safe even at the Hill Ararat." This interesting record tells us how they encountered great storms and hostile men-of-war; but through all met together every day to wait upon the Lord and steered as they believed that He directed. When they had been five weeks at sea and seemed one day in great danger, Robert Fowler relates that "Humphrey Norton, falling into communion with God, told me that he had received a confortable answer, and also that about such a day we should land in America, which was even so fulfilled." And he adds: "Also, thus it was all the voyage with the faithful, who were carried far above storms and tempests, that, when the ship went either to the right hand or to the left, their hands joined all as one, and did direct her way; so that we have seen and said: We see the Lord leading our vessel as it were a man leading a horse by the head; we regarding neither latitude nor longitude, but kept to our Line, which was, and is, our Leader, Guide and Rule."

Five of the party "had movings" to visit "the Dutch plantation called New Amsterdam" (now New York), then a very inaccessible region, and they were thankful when, after a two months' voyage, the vessel touched land at a part of Long Island and they were put ashore on July 31, 1657, to carry out their purpose. The other Friends proceeded to Rhode Island, the home of religious liberty, where they received a cordial welcome. From this base they went out by ones and twos to carry their message to the New England and other colonies, undaunted by the severity of the laws which were enacted against them. A letter of John Copeland's, written a week after they landed at Newport, says: "Christopher Holder and I are going to Martha's Vineyard in obedience to the will of our God, whose will is our joy. Humphrey Norton is at present in Rhode Island, Mary Clark is waiting to go toward Boston, William Brend is toward Providence. The Lord God of Hosts is with us, the shout of a King is amongst us; the people fear our God!"

Mary Clark, who was "the mother of children, having a husband in England whom she left to come unto you," had come over under "a special moving" for Boston, and she succeeded in delivering her message, but it was answered by twenty stripes on her bare back from a whip with three cords "laid on with fury," followed by an imprisonment of twelve weeks in the winter. John Endicott, Governor of Massachusetts, was determined to keep Quakerism out of his colony, and there were others like-minded, who had themselves left England in search of religious liberty, but whose ideals were utterly opposed to the Quaker doctrine of the inward light with its resulting belief in the right of every man to worship God according to his conscience. They felt it to be their bounden duty to safeguard the new home they had established from any taint of heresy and were prepared to persecute even to the death those who differed from them in order to preserve their own narrow standard of orthodoxy.

In February 1658 John Rous and Christopher Holder, feeling within them "the fire and the hammer" which made them eager to be where their testimony seemed most needed, came again to Boston and were sentenced by Endicott to lose an ear apiece. Amongst those who witnessed the execution of this cruel sentence was Catherine Scott, of Providence, who was given ten stripes because she sympathized openly with the sufferers, and was told that "if she came thither again there was likely to be a law to hang her." Her brave answer was: "If God calls us, woe to us if we come not. I have no question that He whom we love will make us not count our lives dear unto ourselves for His name's sake."

This threatened law was passed in October 1658 in order to end, if possible, the "inroads" of "this pernicious sect." It was carried through the House of Deputies by a majority of only one, and was always unpopular with the citizens. To the Friends it was a fresh challenge to their loyalty and zeal, and it was not long before William Robinson, Marmaduke Stephenson, Mary Dyer, of Rhode Island, and a child of eleven, Patience, daughter of Catherine Scott, felt called to go to Boston to witness against the persecuting spirit. The little girl, we are told, "confounded the lawyers and doctors with her answers," but was turned over to her family as too young

to come under the law, whilst the other three were promptly "banished on pain of death." Four weeks later they came back and with them quite a company of men and women who were "moved of the Lord," as the old account tells us, "to look your bloody laws in the face and to accompany those who should suffer by them."

Sentence of death was passed on Robinson, Stephenson and Mary Dyer, and on October 27, 1659, they were led out to execution, their faces radiant with "glorious signs of heavenly joy and gladness." At the last moment Mary Dyer was reprieved and sent back to her family, but she stedfastly refused to accept her life if the law was still to be in force against "the suffering seed," and in May 1660 she was back in Boston. This time her husband, who was one of the leading men in Rhode Island, pleaded for her, and she was offered her life, if she would but return home. "Nay," she replied, standing with her foot on the ladder of the gallows, "in obedience to the will of the Lord God I came and in His will I abide faithful unto death."

The only other Friend to suffer capital punishment was William Leddra, of Barbados, who had already borne tortures and imprisonment in "the bloody den" of Boston. Shortly before his death he testified that "all the imprisonments, and banishments on pain of death, and the loud threatenings of a halter did no more affright me, through the strength and power of God, than if they had threatened to bind a spider's web to my finger. . . . I desire, as far as the Lord draws me, to follow my forefathers and brethren in suffering and in joy. My spirit waits and worships at the feet of Immanuel." [1]

Besides those who were put to death a large number were fined and banished. A law passed in 1659 had enacted that "all children and servants, and others that for conscience sake cannot come to their meetings [i.e. the recognized Church services] to worship, and have not estates in their hand to answer the fines, must be sold for slaves to Barbados or Virginia, or other remote parts." This cruel law was put in force, amongst others, against Daniel and Provided, children of Lawrence and Cassandra Southwick, of Salem, and an order was made out to

[1] *New England Judged*, p. 217. Quoted in *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, p. 88.

sell them into slavery. No captain could, however, be found willing to undertake the iniquitous task. Whittier has immortalized this incident (with a poet's licence in details) in his poem *Cassandra Southwick*, and his verses have probably done more than many pages of history to bring home to us what the punishment of banishment and the dread of slavery meant to these brave witness bearers.

Meanwhile Friends in England had been using all their influence to put a stop to the New England persecutions, and when the news came of William Leddra's death, Edward Burrough went to the King and said: "There is a vein of innocent blood opened in thy dominions, which will run over all if it is not stopped." The King replied: "But I will stop that vein." "Then," said Edward Burrough, "do it speedily, for we do not know how many may soon be put to death." The King answered: "As speedily as ye will," and the secretary being called, a mandamus was forthwith granted. The King said that he had "no occasion at present to send a ship to New England," but that Friends might send one if they liked, and he gave Burrough leave to choose the messenger. Burrough named Samuel Shattuck, a Salem Friend who had been banished on pain of death, and he was duly appointed by the King as royal messenger. Friends then chartered a ship, which sailed in ten days, and in spite of heavy storms, anchored in six weeks in Boston harbour on a First-day, bearing the King's messenger and a number of other banished Friends. We are again indebted to Whittier for a graphic description in *The King's Missive* of the arrival of this ship and of the interview between Endicott and Shattuck: Endicott in a storm of futile anger that a banished Quaker should have dared to return to his jurisdiction, and still further incensed by Shattuck appearing in his hat, which he promptly ordered to be taken off—Shattuck quiet and self-possessed, producing his credentials as a royal messenger and handing the mandamus with the royal seal attached to the angry and astonished Governor. "Give Mr. Shattuck his hat," Endicott commanded, as he himself uncovered at sight of the royal arms, and then followed the laconic answer: "We shall obey his Majesty's commands," as he turned to dictate an order for the release of all Quakers at present imprisoned in Boston.

This "missive" from the King marks an epoch in the history of colonial Quakerism. The Puritan founders of New England had tried their utmost to keep the Quakers out of their colony, but they had failed, and it had now been made clear to the rulers of Massachusetts that the authorities in England were against them and that though they might perhaps still persecute the Quakers, they could no longer hope to exterminate them.

So far we have spoken mainly of Massachusetts, where the fight for spiritual freedom was really waged, but fortunately there were other colonies more favourable to religious liberty. Rhode Island had been founded in 1638 by a small company who were opposed to the persecuting policy of the Massachusetts rulers, and who were resolved to make freedom of conscience a part of their colonial policy. From the first landing of Mary Fisher and Ann Austin in 1656 it always proved a harbour of refuge where the persecuted Friends could rest in safety, for the spiritual outlook of the Rhode Island colonists was similar in many respects to that of Friends, and when some of the *Woodhouse* missionaries came to the island several of the foremost families at once accepted their message. Dr. Rufus M. Jones tells us that the first Quaker Meeting in the New World was established here and "only four years later" (i.e. in 1661) "an annual meeting was established on the island . . . which under the name of 'The Yearly Meeting of Friends in New England' has had a continuous history to the present day." [1] In another place he says: "In the Puritan colonies of New England, Quakers were, of course, without the privileges of franchise or office-holding, and in Episcopalian colonies like Virginia, where uniformity was insisted upon, the way to influence in the Government was tightly closed to them; but in Rhode Island the only obstacle to position in Government affairs which the Quakers met was the difficulty of bearing responsibility for war-preparation. In that colony, for more than a hundred years, Quakers were continually in office, and for thirty-six terms the Governorship of the colony was occupied by members of the Society." [2] In other colonies also the influence of Friends was very strong. In 1674 they had come into possession of West Jersey, and when, five years later East

[1] *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, pp. 53–54.
[2] Ibid., Introduction, p. xv.

Jersey also was offered for sale, it was purchased by William Penn and eleven other Friends. It was here, in fact, in drawing up the Charter for these new provinces and establishing their laws that Penn made his first experiments in colonial government. New Jersey was under the rule of Friends until it became a royal colony in 1702.

In North Carolina, Friends were for many years the only organized religious body, and one of their number, John Archdale, was governor of the colony from 1694 to 1697, and took a prominent part in shaping the history of both the Carolinas.

It is quite clear from their writings that the early Quakers *expected* their views of religious truth to be universally accepted in the New World, and for a time it almost seemed as if their expectations were to be fulfilled. Down to the middle of the eighteenth century they formed a majority of the population in many of the colonial towns and settlements from Maine and New Hampshire in the North to Virginia and the Carolinas in the South. Everywhere their influence on the political life of the colonies was deep and lasting, and in their constant central aim to make their outward life conform to their spiritual ideals they were a leavening power in every community.

In Pennsylvania, where they had from the first almost entire control, Friends were able to give their methods the fullest scope and Penn's "Holy Experiment" in the administration of this province is therefore of such paramount interest that it must be dealt with in a separate chapter.

In 1671 George Fox felt it "upon him from the Lord to go beyond the seas to visit America," and his visit kindled fresh enthusiasm in the scattered communities and did much to build them up into a strong and healthy organization. Twelve Friends went with him, including William Edmondson, John Stubbs, Fox's son-in-law John Rous, James Lancaster and the aged but energetic Elizabeth Hooton, the last-named feeling it laid upon her to accompany him "to do the best that is required for him." Margaret Fox, only just released from a long imprisonment in Lancaster Castle, and some other Friends, came on board and sailed with them as far as Deal, where they finally took leave of each other. The ship was a leaky old yacht called the *Industry*, and the fifty passengers were frequently

called on to help with the pumps, which had to be kept going day and night to keep the water from gaining.

It was an adventurous voyage, for when they had been three weeks at sea a Sallee (i.e. Turkish) man-of-war gave them chase. When she gained upon them and they could not get rid of her by changing their course, even in the dark, the captain came to Fox's cabin to ask his counsel as to what they should do, and he, "retiring in spirit," was shown by the Lord that "His life and power was placed between us and the ship that pursued us." He told this to the captain and sailors, advising them to steer their right course, to put out all candles but the one they steered by, and to speak to all the passengers to be still and quiet. "About eleven at night," says Fox, "the watch called out that they were just upon us," which frightened some of the passengers, but in a short time the moon went down and "a fresh gale arose, and the Lord hid us from them and we sailed briskly on and saw them no more." They were seven weeks at sea, reaching Barbados October 3, 1671, and during the whole voyage Fox was very ill, and so continued for three weeks after he landed. He was taken in a coach to the house of Thomas Rous, and here he stayed for nearly a month "too weak to go abroad," but Friends came to see him, and he tells us: "Because I was not well able to travel, the Friends of the island concluded to have their men's and women's meetings for the service of the Church at Thomas Rous's, where I lay, by which means I was present at each of their meetings and had very good service for the Lord in both. For they had need of information in many things, divers disorders having crept in for want of care and watchfulness."

In Barbados Fox met with slavery for the first time, and we find him advising Friends with regard to the treatment of the negroes: "To endeavour to train them up in the fear of God," "to cause their overseers to deal mildly and gently with them," and "after certain years of servitude" to set them free. This advice shows the attitude adopted by the Society from the first, viz. that the blacks were human beings, children of the same Heavenly Father, and must be treated as such. This conviction, faithfully followed to its logical conclusion, very soon led to "uneasiness" with the practice of keeping slaves at all, even when kindly treated, and resulted in the stand made

by Friends against slavery in the latter half of the eighteenth century.

After three months in Barbados, Fox writes: "Having visited Friends, throughly settled meetings, and dispatched that service for which the Lord brought me thither, I felt my spirit clear of that island and found drawings towards Jamaica." Here, also, he had "much service." "There was a great convincement and many received the Truth." He "settled several meetings and brought Friends into pretty good order." During their stay here Elizabeth Hooton died—departing, as George Fox tells us, "in peace, like a lamb, bearing testimony to Truth at her departure."

Fox was in Jamaica seven weeks, and whilst there wrote one of his short letters to his wife, which may be interesting as a sample of the generalities with which Margaret Fox had to be satisfied when he was away from home :—

"My Dear Heart,—

"To whom is my love, and to the children, in that which changeth not, but is over all; and to all Friends in those parts. I have been at Jamaica about five weeks. Friends here are generally well; and here is a convincement; but things would be too large to write of. Sufferings in every place attend me; but the blessed Seed is over all: the great Lord be praised, who is Lord of sea and land, and of all things therein. We intend to pass from hence about the beginning of the next month, towards Maryland if the Lord please. Dwell all of you in the Seed of God; in His Truth I rest in love to you all.

"G. F.

"Jamaica.

"23*rd* of the 12*th Month*, 1671."

From Jamaica Fox sailed for Maryland, a tempestuous and dangerous voyage which occupied six or seven weeks.

On landing in Maryland in May 1672, they found John Burnyeat, intending shortly to sail for England. He had appointed a General Meeting at West River for all Friends in the provinces, that he might take his leave of them, and this gave Fox an excellent opportunity for service. It was "a very

large meeting, which continued for several days," and there were in attendance "five or six Justices of the Peace, the Speaker of their parliament or assembly, one of the council and divers others of note." This was the beginning of Baltimore Yearly Meeting, the second to be established in America, whose 250th anniversary has just been celebrated (May 1922).

Afterwards Fox travelled through Maryland and then by land to New England: "A tedious journey through the woods and wilderness, over bogs and great rivers." "We took horse," he says, "at the head of Tredhaven Creek and travelled through the woods, till we came a little above the head of Miles river, by which we passed . . . and so to the head of Chester river, where, making a fire, we took up our lodging in the woods. Next morning we travelled through the woods till we came to Sassafras river, which we went over in canoes, causing our horses to swim by.

"Then we rode to Bohemia river, where, in like manner, swimming our horses, we ourselves went over in canoes. We rested a little at a plantation by the way, but not for long, for we had thirty miles to ride that afternoon, if we would reach a town, which we were willing to do, and therefore rode hard for it. I, with some others whose horses were strong, got to the town that night, exceedingly tired, and wet to the skin; but George Pattison and Robert Widders, being weaker-horsed, were obliged to lie in the woods that night also. The town we went to was a Dutch town called New Castle whither R. W. and G. P. came to us next morning. We departed thence, and got over the River Delaware, not without great danger of some of our lives. When we were over, we were troubled to procure guides, who were hard to get, and very chargeable. Then had we that wilderness country, since called West Jersey, to pass through, not then inhabited by English; so that we sometimes travelled a whole day together without seeing man or woman, house or dwelling place. Sometimes we lay in the woods by a fire, and sometimes in the Indians' wigwams or houses.

"A little later he writes: I determined to pass through the woods on the other side of Delaware Bay, that we might head the creeks and rivers as much as possible. On the ninth of the seventh month we set forwards and passed through many Indian towns, and over some rivers and bogs; and when we had rode

GEORGE FOX PREACHING AT FLUSHING, LONG ISLAND

(See p. 209)

(After an old drawing in the possession of Haverford College, U.S.A.)

about forty miles, we made a fire at night and laid by it. As we came among the Indians, we declared the day of the Lord to them." References to the Indians are very frequent throughout the *Journal*. Fox seems always to have found an open door amongst them, and he gives us many interesting pictures of the way in which they received him. For example :—

"We came one night to an Indian town and lay at the house of the King, who was a very pretty [i.e. kindly] man. Both he and his wife received us very lovingly, and his attendants (such as they were) were very respectful to us. They laid us mats to lie on ; but provision was very short with them, they having caught but little that day. At another Indian town where we stayed their King came to us, and he could speak some English. I spake to him much and also to his people ; and they were very loving to us." On Shelter Island, the King with his Council and about a hundred others gathered. Fox says : "They sate down like Friends, and heard very attentively, while I spoke to them by an interpreter, an Indian that could speak English well. After the meeting they appeared very loving, and confessed that what was said to them was truth." At another time, in Maryland, he speaks of "a very glorious meeting, at which were very many people," amongst others, some Indians, "one called their emperor, an Indian king and their speaker, who all sat very attentive, and carried themselves very lovingly. An establishing, settling meeting it was." The next day, he says, "we went by water ten miles to the Indian town where this emperor dwelt. . . . In the morning the emperor came himself, and had me to the town ; and they were generally come together, and had their speaker and other officers with them, and the old empress sate among them. They sate very grave and sober, and were all very attentive, beyond many called Christians."

From Shelter Island they put to sea for Long Island, and after a stormy passage got safely to Oyster Bay and then on to Flushing, where they had "a very large meeting ; many hundreds of people being there, some of whom came about thirty miles to it. A glorious and heavenly meeting it was," says Fox, "(praised be the Lord God), and the people were much satisfied."

Thus he travelled on, and after visiting Rhode Island and

New York returned through the Jerseys and Delaware to Maryland, then through the Carolinas and Virginia, everywhere holding large meetings and settling the discipline. Having finished his service in Virginia, he set sail in an open sloop for Maryland, but was overtaken by a great storm and glad to get to land and find a lodging for the night. They went forward the next day, but "a storm rising, had much ado to get to shore; and our boat being open, the water flashed often in and sometimes over us so that we were completely wet. Being got to land, we made a fire in the woods to warm and dry us, and there we lay all night, the wolves howling round us." The next day, Fox says, "we sailed again, but the wind being against us, we made but little headway, and were fain to get to shore at Point Comfort, where yet we found but small comfort. For the weather was so cold that, though we made a good fire in the woods to lie by, the water that we had brought for our use was frozen near the fireside."

In Maryland, he once more attended the General Meeting which was "a wonderful, glorious meeting, and the mighty presence of the Lord was seen and felt over all"; and then feeling their "spirits to be clear of those parts of the world and to draw towards Old England again," he and the Friends who were with him set sail on the 21st of Third Month (May) 1673, and after a very stormy voyage landed at King's Road, then the harbour for Bristol, on the 28th of June. Thence they rode to Bristol where Friends received them with great joy.

Fox had been absent from England nearly two years. His own summing up of the service is that they had "travelled through most parts of that country and visited most of the plantations, having sounded the alarm to people where we came, and proclaimed the day of God's salvation among them." Everywhere he had been well received, and we hear of no opposition. He does not seem to have visited Massachusetts.

Dr. Rufus M. Jones tells us that in North Carolina, Fox and William Edmondson, who was with him, were missionary pioneers. "This," he says, "was the first organized effort of any kind to carry the religion of Christ into North Carolina. No Episcopal minister had yet come to the colony, and no dissenting ministers appeared in this field before Fox and Edmondson. They were therefore, in more sense than one, 'path-

breakers,' as they pushed through the southern wilderness and answered the 'great desire' of the people." [1]

Most of Fox's work, however, consisted in the building up of meetings already established, a service which was of the greatest importance for the future of Quakerism in America. Up to this time the organization had been of the most casual kind, meetings for business being only held occasionally, at the call of some travelling Friends.

Fox's visit altered all this. Not only did his powerful preaching result in the "convincement" of a great number of people, many of whom were persons of importance socially or in the government, but the gift of organization enabled him to bring together the scattered groups, to teach them the value of meetings for Church affairs and to establish a permanent discipline. Dr. R. M. Jones says that when Fox sailed away for Bristol he left behind him "a strong group of Friends, stretching, with some breaks, from the coast of New Hampshire to Albemarle Sound in the Carolinas, and having accomplished a piece of colonial missionary labour which, so far as I know, no visitor to America in colonial times paralleled." (In an MS. *Journal* of his American journey, Fox estimates that he travelled sixteen thousand one hundred and forty-nine miles.). He could honestly say that 'Friends in those parts are *well established* in the Truth.'" [2]

For a hundred years after the first planting of Quakerism in America, the movement continued to grow and expand. Everywhere that Friends went they carried their message, and travelling ministers (many of them from England) did a great deal to foster the spiritual life of isolated members or small groups. As colonization proceeded, Friends also pushed westward; meetings were started in fresh centres, and they always maintained their attitude of friendliness towards the Indians and the negroes in the communities where they settled.

Unfortunately, however, there were alien influences which prevented Friends from fully carrying out their ideals; and, later on, as was the case also in England, they lost some of the fervour of their first zeal and became less concerned with making the world around them better than with keeping them-

[1] *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, pp. 287–288.
[2] Ibid. pp. 288 and 304.

selves separate from its spirit. They became self-centred and self-conscious, and the habit of introspection brought out and magnified little differences, with the result that early in the nineteenth century several regrettable divisions on points of doctrine took place. Since that time on the American continent it is not sufficient to say simply that a man is a "Friend." He must be further distinguished by the term "Orthodox," "Hicksite," or "Wilburite," each of these sections regarding themselves as quite a distinct body, though all claim to be spiritual descendants of George Fox and the early Friends. It is cause for rejoicing that in recent years there is evidence of a desire to draw closer together again, as Friends are learning that the points on which they agree are more numerous and more vitally important than those on which they differ, and that it is still possible for them to work and to worship together.

The All Friends' Conference of 1920, with its times of deep spiritual fellowship, helped greatly towards this nearer union, as has also the joint work, undertaken together by American and English Friends of all shades of opinion, for the relief of sufferers in the World War.

There are at the present time about 125,000 who call themselves "Friends" on the American Continent.

PART III

THE STRUGGLE OF QUAKERISM FOR EXISTENCE AND FOR SELF-EXPRESSION

"In the Restoration Period, Friends were fighting to preserve their existence in a hostile atmosphere, and were endeavouring to express themselves in their writings and through colonization."—W. C. BRAITHWAITE.

CHAPTER XIV

THE RESTORATION

"For what is a King, and what is a Parliament, what is a Protector, and what is a Council, while the presence of the Lord is not with them? And we are not for names, nor men, nor titles of Government, but we are for justice and mercy and truth and peace, and true freedom, that these may be exalted in our nation, and that goodness, righteousness, meekness, temperance, peace, and unity with God and one with another, that these things may abound. And we are not for such and such names and titles of government that promise fair things and perform nothing; but if a Council, if a Parliament, if any one man or a number of men whatsoever shall have the Spirit of the Lord poured on him or them to govern this nation, under such only shall the nation be happy and enjoy rest, and the righteous rejoice, when tyranny and oppression shall be clean removed, strife and contention and self-seeking utterly abandoned, and when peace and truth flows forth as a stream, and the Lord alone rules in thy rulers, and under such a government only shalt thou, O Nation, be happy, and thy people a free people."—EDWARD BURROUGH, Address to the Committee of Safety, in December 1659.

As indicated in the above extract, Friends lived in the spirit of the early Christians, described in the letter to Diognetus, of whom it was said: "Their existence is on earth, but their citizenship is in heaven. They obey the established laws, and they surpass the laws in their own lives." They were more concerned with the *principles* than with the *forms* of government. If the law oppressed their consciences (as in requiring an oath, or forbidding them to meet for worship), they opposed the law with a fine disregard of consequences, but they were indifferent to the form of government. Their point of view was theocratic rather than Roundhead or Cavalier. The world rightly regarded them as enemies to the existing order of things, and did not realize that these heralds of a new way of life, who declared that rulers and governors must dwell in righteousness and truth, who denounced oppression and advocated sweeping social reforms, would use only spiritual weapons to advance the Kingdom of God, which they believed that Christ

had come to establish upon earth. Consequently they were constantly falling under suspicion (no matter what party was in power) of joining in plots to overthrow the existing form of government, and it is needful for us to record briefly the history of the times in order to understand better the treatment meted out to Friends.

When Cromwell died in 1658, his Government seemed to be at the height of its power, but in reality he had failed to establish any stable authority in place of that which he had overthrown. His rule had become a mere military absolutism, and at his death a strong reaction set in. Although it had been undertaken from the highest motives, his Protectorate, in fact, depended upon force rather than on free consent, and the burden of a standing army, together with its disregard of Parliamentary institutions, had made Englishmen hate military rule. The nation tried to get the power back into its own hands; the army leaders tried to rule without civilian help, and the country was threatened with anarchy when General Monck came forward on the side of civil authority, marched to London and declared for a free Parliament. He was welcomed everywhere—the fleet joined in the outcry against the army, many of the troops were disaffected, and there was great eagerness to put an end to sword government and to restore civil authority.

At the end of January Monck was warmly received in London by the Republican leaders. The remnant of the Long Parliament, called the "Rump," was sitting, but had no real authority, and in March it was dissolved and arrangements made for the election of a free and representative Parliament. This threw the whole country into a ferment, and the Royalists gained confidence every day. The Quaker letters of the period are full of allusions to the excitement of public feeling. Thomas Salthouse writes to Margaret Fell from York in January 1660: "These strong overturnings and sudden shakings that have happened of late in the nation doth not as yet move nor shake the mountain of the Lord's house, nor much hinder Friends from meeting together. . . . George Monck was received as a prince the last week in this city, and is marched southward with his army. . . . This city is kept by men that adheres unto him, and what they stand for and prosecute time will make

manifest; we only mind our work which the Lord calls us to, and wait to be guided by His counsel."

At Bristol, in February, "the 'prentices with the rude people were up, running with naked swords . . . up and down the streets, so throng that it were hard to pass through them." At Worcester "the rude people were up in much madness and making fires in the streets." Fox, when asked what he thought of the times, replied that "the Lord's light shined over all, and His power was set over all."

In London Monck's soldiers behaved very rudely to the Quakers, especially at their meeting in the Palace Yard, Westminster, of which Edward Byllinge writes in February 1660: "We were pulled out by the hair of the head, kicked and knocked down, both men and women, in such a manner not here to be expressed. Many were the knocks and blows and kicks myself and wife received, and this was done by General M[onck]'s foot, who came into the meeting with sword and pistol, being, as they said, bound by an oath to leave never a sectarian in England." Byllinge himself was kicked across to the door of Westminster Hall. The House was sitting, and he sent in a complaint, and afterwards saw General Monck, who made an order requiring the soldiers to "forbear to disturb the peaceable meetings of the Quakers, they doing nothing prejudicial to the Parliament or Commonwealth of England."

In the North Caton tells us that travelling became difficult, as watches were set with strict orders to arrest all suspicious persons—Quakers, Baptists and Papists. At Warrington he was attending a meeting when it was broken up by soldiers, and Friends were driven out of the town. They sat down by the roadside and had a "sweet and precious meeting" there, until the soldiers came again and beat Caton with spears and muskets, after which he again returned to the meeting, and, he writes: "We kept [it] a certain time to our great refreshment in the Lord, whose power and presence did exceedingly appear amongst us, for as our suffering at that time was greater than ordinary, even so was our refreshment in the Lord."

Monck and the Council of State, which was mainly composed of Presbyterians, ruled the country during the interval of forty days between the two Parliaments. The Council was willing to bring in the King on Presbyterian terms, but Monck

refused, because he had promised that everything should be left to the decision of the free Parliament. At the same time he was making private overtures to Charles and advising him to promise the required concessions as an act of grace and not to wait till they were forced from him by a formal treaty. The Declaration of Breda on April 4th was the result of these negotiations. In this Charles declared that "because the passion and uncharitableness of the times have produced several opinions in religion, by which men are engaged in parties and animosities against each other . . . we do declare a liberty to tender consciences, and that no man shall be disquieted or called in question for differences of opinion in the matter of religion, which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom, and that we shall be ready to consent to such an Act of Parliament as, upon mature deliberation, shall be offered to us, for the full granting that indulgence."

Throughout the Declaration there was a full recognition of the supreme authority of Parliament, making the actual security for liberty of conscience dependent not on the word of the King, but on the temper of Parliament.

Meanwhile the elections were taking place amidst great excitement and the King's friends obtained a large majority. The Declaration was received with enthusiasm, and on May 8th 1660, Charles was proclaimed King. Caton writes: "The concourse of people that have been in the streets this day have been innumerable; the shouting for joy hath been so exceeding great among the people at times that the sound of many trumpets could scarce be heard, nay the bells themselves could not sometimes be heard, but the noise hath been exceedingly confused, like unto the noise of many waters." Hubberthorne says: "This day did King Charles and his two brethren, James and Henry, come into this city. Charles is of a pretty, sober countenance, but the great pride and vanity of those that brought him in is unexpressable, and he is in danger to be tempted to those things which he, in himself, is not inclined unto: the great excess and abomination that hath been used this day in this city is unexpressable."

The spirit of persecution soon showed itself among the Cavaliers, who regarded Friends' meetings as tumultuous assemblies to be broken up at every opportunity. In the vale of the White

Horse the county militia broke up a meeting and threw some of the Friends into a pond; in Dorset, Gloucestershire, Merioneth, and Wiltshire meetings were broken up and Friends roughly handled by the soldiers; at Cambridge there were riotous scenes, one of which is described in a letter written by Alderman James Blackley to Gerrards Robert, May 28, 1660. He says: "Yesterday, in our meeting-house, when we had been together two hours, the soldiers came and set upon us with swords and their staves, and brake in upon us and gat smiths' hammers and brake the windows and doors in pieces, and with shivered boards and window-bars fell upon us and beat and wounded many Friends, that few or none did escape without a wound, and haled every one out, and would not suffer one to stay within the house; only I stayed there to see what they would do. And when the house was emptied of Friends they brake down all the glass windows, the stairs, the forms, benches, chairs, etc., whatever could be broken in the house. The soldiers and scholars began and the rude people in the town made an end."

During these eventful months Fox had been travelling as usual in various parts of England. In April 1660 he attended the Yearly Meeting of ministers at Balby, then he went on to the important General Meeting at Skipton, already referred to, and thence to Arnside and Swarthmore. A few weeks later he was arrested, watched all night at Ulverston by a frightened guard, who feared that he might escape (as a wizard) up the chimney, and then taken sixteen miles on horseback across the sands to Lancaster, escorted by a troop of horse. Here he was imprisoned as a person "generally suspected to be a common disturber of the peace of this nation, an enemy to . . . the King, and a chief upholder of the Quakers' sect, and that he, together with others of his fanatic opinion, have of late endeavoured to make insurrections in these parts of the country and to embroil the whole kingdom in blood;" and the gaoler was told to keep him prisoner till released by order of the King or Parliament.

Margaret Fell went up to London to see what could be done for him and other Friends, and with the help of Ann Curtis, whose father, when Sheriff of Bristol, had been hanged for favouring the Royalists, she succeeded in getting a writ of *habeas corpus* (which she refers to as "horposs scorpions"), which

directed that Fox should be sent to London for trial. He was allowed to travel unattended all the way from Lancaster to London with one or two Friends, on his promising to appear before the judges on a fixed day. The journey occupied three weeks, and he held meetings and visited Friends in the towns through which he passed, as he was accustomed to do when travelling. On the appointed day he presented himself in London and declared before his four judges that he "was innocent as a child concerning the charge," and asked whether they thought that if he and his friends had been such men as they were accused of being, he would have carried the charge against himself up to London as he had done and would not rather have needed a troop or two to guard him. The case was sent on to the King and his Council, and in a few days Fox was set at liberty.

The efforts of Margaret Fell and other Friends had done much to convince the authorities of the loyalty of the Quakers, and meetings were now for the most part held without interference. "Glorious, great meetings we had," says Fox, "and the everlasting Truth shined and many flocked in unto Truth." The King was sincerely anxious to carry out the promise of religious liberty which he had given in the Declaration of Breda, and everything seemed going well, when, at the beginning of 1661, the Fifth Monarchy rising re-awakened the suspicions of the authorities and was the cause of the most wholesale of all the imprisonments ever borne by Friends.

Although only some thirty-five persons, under the leadership of Thomas Venner, actually took part in the rising, yet their rushing forth armed from their meeting-house and their furious behaviour threw the city into a four-days' panic, which resulted in the issuing of a Proclamation on January 10th prohibiting meetings of Anabaptists, Quakers and Fifth Monarchy Men, and commanding justices to tender the Oath of Allegiance to persons brought before them for assembling at such meetings. What followed is graphically told by W. C. Braithwaite in his *Second Period of Quakerism*, and I will quote with some omissions and slight alterations for the sake of brevity.

"On the following Sunday Friends met as usual and many were taken, though Fox himself escaped. The zeal of the authorities soon filled the gaols with Quakers. The country

felt itself in peril till they were safely under lock and key. In a few weeks imprisonments took place to the almost incredible number of 4,230. The sudden storm swept many counties bare of men Friends. The numbers reached 500 in London, 400 in Yorkshire, 280 in Lancashire, 240 in Warwickshire and 100 or more in eleven other districts. At Reading, for refusing fees, twenty-two Friends were herded into the dungeon, till, in the gaoler's words, 'there was not such another bed in Berkshire.' At Bristol, where they had great strength, the Mayor required sureties for good behaviour, meaning thereby to hinder them from meeting, and was met with the answer, typical of the Quaker spirit, that he might as well think to hinder the sun from shining or the tide from flowing, as the Lord's people from meeting to wait upon Him, whilst but two of them were left together. In Cambridge they spared none, neither widows nor fatherless children, but sent all to prison; At Plymouth the women, in spite of threats, kept up the meeting while the men lay in gaol. In Lancashire there was a general imprisonment. The pistols and fowling pieces were taken out of Swarthmore Hall, and Bridget Fell reported to her mother in London that 'if they keep men in custody that should till the ground, the time of seeding being now, it cannot be expected that we should be able to maintain them in prison [and] hire our tillage at home.' In Somerset, Ilchester gaol was thronged with 212 Friends, two of whom were put in fetters and led through the streets by the hangman. About seventy were thrown into the White Lion prison in Southwark, among the felons, who rifled them of clothes and money 'to the value of £28 1s. 9d.'

"The Quaker leaders had their full share of suffering; indeed, after the rank and file had been released, they were often detained for months as ringleaders and as hostages for the good behaviour of the rest.

"A few cases must serve for many more that could be given. John Whitehead and the saintly Isaac Penington were companions in Aylesbury gaol, lodged with sixty or seventy more in an old malt-house, 'so decayed that it was scarce fit for a dog-house,' and so insecure that they might have gone out at pleasure.

"William Dewsbury, from York Castle, with his triumphant

faith, wrote to Friends, 'Whether in bonds or out of bonds:' 'Stay your minds and lift up your heads, and be strong in the name of the Lord, and fear not the wrath of man, for it is limited. . . . Glad your hearts in the unlimited power of God.'

"George Whitehead, with three other Friends, shared a recess in the wall of Norwich Castle, called the Vice; Joseph Fuce, at Dover Castle, was 'put into a dungeon-like hole under the bell-tower, a place very filthy . . . overrun with maggots and other insects, having no windows for light, only some holes cut through the door.'" [1]

Meanwhile George Fox and Richard Hubberthorne had been prompt in drawing up a Declaration against plots and fightings, which was presented to the King on January 21st, 1661, and was cried up and down the streets and at the Exchange.

This noble disclaimer of plotting, together with the exoneration of the Quakers by the Fifth Monarchy leaders who had been hanged on the 19th January, led to an Order by the Lord Mayor, issued on the 25th, which stated that it was found that the Quakers had no hand in the plot, and directed their release. It was not, however, until the 11th May, after much effort by Margaret Fell, Thomas Moore and others that a full liberation was secured. All Quakers in prison for refusing oaths or for meeting contrary to the proclamation were now to be freed; but the King declared "that he shall expect returns of loyalty and all due obedience . . . His Majesty not intending them impunity if they shall offend in the future." The panic which had led to the wholesale imprisonment was over, but the existing conditions were such as to make it inevitable that fresh troubles should arise.

Under the Commonwealth Friends had been busy spreading their message through a Puritan England, which was largely composed of earnest and sympathetic seekers after Truth. The persecution thay had suffered had come mostly from a few ignorant or prejudiced persons, the Government and the nation generally being inclined to favour them. There were, however, several inherent principles of Quakerism which made it difficult for others to understand their position and which constantly brought them into trouble. The Quaker statement of belief in the indwelling presence of Christ was often misinter-

[1] *The Second Period of Quakerism*, pp. 9–14.

preted as a claim to divine attributes, and condemned as blasphemy. Their refusal to take an oath or to remove their hats in a court of justice frequently led to further trouble, even when the original charge on which they had been brought up was proved to be false. Both refusals laid them open to a charge of contempt of court, and the refusal to take an oath was frequently construed as a proof of disaffection to the existing Government; the more so on account of the fact—strange as it seems to us—that Quakers were often suspected of being Papists in disguise.

The Proclamation of February 1655,[1] although issued in the cause of religious liberty, had in reality become a weapon of persecution against Friends, and the vigorous itinerating work of the Publishers of Truth exposed them further, as we have already noted, to a fresh form of oppression, viz. the application of the Act of Elizabeth (St. 39 Eliz. cap. 4) "for punishment of rogues, vagabonds and sturdy beggars," which was never intended for Quaker preachers, but was frequently used by unscrupulous magistrates as a ready means of convicting them.

An old Quaker tract, published in 1660, tells us that "there hath suffered imprisonments, putting in the stocks, whippings, loss of goods and other abuses for keeping a good conscience towards God and man before the King came into England, 3,170 persons." The number is surprisingly large, but it remains true that under the Commonwealth persecution was mostly local and capricious and of a petty kind. Whilst the State ministers and the magistrates tried to suppress the Quakers as dangerous enthusiasts, the soldiers, who were religious enthusiasts themselves, usually supported them, and Cromwell and others in the Central Government appreciated their genuineness, and were content for the most part to leave them alone. As time went on Friends in the different neighbourhoods won for themselves the confidence and respect of their neighbours. Up to April 1659, the number of Friends who had died under their sufferings only reached 21, compared with more than 300 from April 1659 to the Restoration in May, 1660.

With the Restoration a great change passed over the spirit of the nation. There was a wide-spread revolt against the strictness of the Puritan rule and during the years of reaction

[1] See ante, chap. ix. p. 139.

which set in, Friends had a hard spiritual fight to defend their very existence in the midst of a hostile atmosphere, and had little strength or opportunity for any systematic proclamation of their message. The King's Declaration, which had promised so well, was rendered ineffective by Presbyterian opposition and by the panic which followed the Fifth Monarchy Rising, and a period of persecution set in which lasted from 1662 till 1672 and which will be the subject of our next chapter.

It was a determined effort to root Nonconformity out of the nation, and the splendid courage with which Friends stood in the forefront of the battle and the final victory of the cause of religious liberty, mark these ten years as epoch-making, not only in the history of Quakerism, but of the world.

CHAPTER XV

THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE

"No denomination so amazed and perplexed the authorities by their obstinacy as the Quakers. It was their boast that their worship, from its very nature, could not be stopped 'by men or devils.' From a meeting of Roman Catholics, they said, you have but to take away the Mass book, or the chalice, or the priest's garments, or even but to spill the water and blow out the candles, and the meeting is over. So, in a meeting of Lutherans or Episcopalians, or in a meeting of Presbyterians or Independents, or Baptists, or Socinians, there is always some implement or set of implements upon which all depends, be it in the liturgy, the gown or surplice, the Bible, or the hour-glass; remove these and make noise enough and there can be no service. Not so with a Quaker meeting. There men and women worship with their hearts without implements, in silence as well as by speech. You may break in upon them, hoot at them, roar at them, drag them about; the meeting, if it is of any size, essentially still goes on till all the component individuals are murdered. Throw them out at the doors in twos and threes and they but re-enter at the window and quietly resume their places. Pull their meeting house down, and they reassemble next day most punctually amid the broken walls and rafters. Shovel sand or earth down upon them, and there they sit, a sight to see, musing immovably among the rubbish. This is no description from fancy; it was the actual practice of the Quakers all over the country. They held their meetings, regularly, perseveringly, and without the least concealment, keeping the doors of their meeting-houses purposely open that all might enter, Informers, constables, or soldiers, and do whatever they chose. In fact the Quakers behaved magnificently. By their peculiar method of open violation of the law and passive resistance only, they rendered a service to the common cause of all the Nonconformist sects which has never been sufficiently acknowledged."—D. Masson, *Life of John Milton*, vi. pp. 587–588.

Only a few days after the release of the Friends who had been imprisoned in connection with the Fifth Monarchy plot, the new Cavalier House of Commons began to prepare a Bill expressly directed against the Quakers. Hubberthorne, Burrough and George Whitehead were all heard at the bar of the House against it, but without result. Burrough declared that if the Bill became law he should continue to attend meetings and should encourage others to do the same. Hubberthorne

argued that as the Quaker meetings were public they could not be used for furthering plots. Nevertheless the Bill passed through both Houses and received the royal assent on May 2, 1662.

It was called "An Act for preventing Mischiefs and Dangers that may arise by certain persons called Quakers and others refusing to take lawful Oaths." It enacted that "Whereas . . . certain persons under the name of Quakers . . . maintained sundry dangerous opinions [about oaths] . . . and . . . under a pretence of Religious Worship, do often assemble themselves in great numbers in several parts of this Realm, to the great endangering of the publick peace and safety, and to the terror of the people, by maintaining a secret and strict correspondence amongst themselves," any person who should, after the 24th of the current month, refuse to take an oath or persuade others to do the same, and all Quakers of sixteen years old or upwards who should assemble to the number of five or more "at any one time, in any place, under pretence of joining in a Religious Worship not authorized by the Laws of this Realm," should be fined to an amount not exceeding £5 for the first, and £10 for the second offence, and if convicted a third time should be transported beyond seas.

The passing of the Quaker Act was the signal for a fresh outbreak of persecution, which fell most heavily upon London Friends. The soldiers entered the Bull and Mouth and other London meetings with "canes in one hand and swords drawn in the other," and forced their way up the meeting "by beating and kicking and hurling the people on heaps, and pushing them with the ends of their muskets and weapons" and swearing and threatening the while.

We have a lively account from the pen of young Thomas Ellwood of one such occasion, and his story is well worth quoting for the picture he gives us both of the life of Friends in prison and of the great care taken for their comfort by their fellow-members, especially the women. He tells us that one morning in 1662, he was attending a meeting at the Bull and Mouth, when suddenly the soldiers rushed in, dragged him and the rest from the meeting, and after penning them in the street, like sheep in a pound, between soldiers, who held their pikes lengthwise from one to another, carried them all off to Bride-

well. Here they were lodged in the large chamber, sixty feet long, known as Wolsey's Banqueting Room. Ellwood says: "It was a general storm which fell that day . . . so that most of our men Friends were made prisoners and the prisons generally filled. And great work had the women to run about from prison to prison to find their husbands, their fathers, their brothers or their servants. . . . And no less care and pains had they, when they had found them, to furnish them with provisions and other necessary accommodations. But an excellent order, even in those early days, was practised among the Friends of that city, by which there were certain Friends of either sex appointed to have the oversight of the prisons in every quarter, and to take care of all Friends, the poor especially, that should be committed thither.

"This prison of Bridewell was under the care of two honest, grave, discreet and motherly women, whose names were Anne Merrick and Anne Travers, both widows. They, so soon as they understood that there were Friends brought into that prison, provided some hot victuals, meat and broth, for the weather was cold; and ordering their servants to bring it, with bread, cheese and beer, came themselves also with it; and having placed it on a table, gave notice to us, *that it was provided for all those that had not others to provide for them, or were not able to provide for themselves.* And there wanted not among us a competent number of such guests.

"As for my part," continues Thomas Ellwood, "though I had lived as frugally as I possibly could . . . yet had I by this time reduced [my little stock] to tenpence, which was all the money I had about me, or anywhere else at my command. This was but a small estate to enter upon an imprisonment with, yet was I not at all discouraged at it, nor had I a murmuring thought. . . . I had lived by Providence before (when for a long time I had no money at all), and I had always found the Lord a good provider. I made no doubt, therefore, that He who sent the ravens to feed Elijah, and who clothes the lilies, would find some means to sustain me with needful food and raiment, and I had learned by experience the truth of that saying: 'Nature is content with few things.'

"Although the sight and smell of hot food was sufficiently enticing to my empty stomach, for I had eaten little that morning

and was hungry, yet, considering the terms of the invitation, I questioned whether I was included in it, and after some reasonings, at length concluded that while I had tenpence in my pocket, I should be an injurious intruder to that mess, which was provided for such as perhaps had not twopence in theirs. Being come to this resolution, I withdrew as far from the table as I could and sat down in a quiet retirement of mind, till the repast was over, which was not long, for there were hands enough at it to make light work of it.

"When evening came, the porter came up the back stairs and, opening the door, told us if we desired to have anything that was to be had in the house, he would bring it us; for there was in the house a chandler's shop, at which beer, bread, butter, cheese, eggs and bacon might be had for money. Upon which many went to him and spake for what of these things they had a mind to, giving him money to pay for them. Among the rest went I, and intending to spin out my tenpence as far as I could, desired him to bring me a penny loaf only. When he returned we all resorted to him to receive our several provisions, which he delivered; and when he came to me, he told me he could not get a penny loaf, but he had brought me two halfpenny loaves. This suited me better; wherefore, returning to my place again, I sat down and eat up one of my loaves, reserving the other for the next day. This was to me both dinner and supper, and so well satisfied was I with it, that I could willingly then have gone to bed, if I had had one to go to, but that was not to be expected there, nor had any one had bedding brought in that night. . . .

"After I had warmed myself pretty thoroughly [by walking about the room], and the evening was pretty far spent, I bethought myself of a lodging, and cast mine eye on the table which stood in the bay window, the frame whereof, I thought, looked somewhat like a bedstead. Wherefore, willing to make sure of that, I gathered up a good armful of the rushes wherewith the floor was covered, and spreading them under that table, crept in upon them in my clothes, and, keeping on my hat, laid my head upon one end of the table's frame instead of a bolster. My example was followed by the rest, who, gathering up rushes as I had done, made themselves beds in other parts of the room; and so to rest we went. . . .

"Next day all they who had families, or belonged to families, had bedding brought in, of one sort or other, which they disposed at the ends and sides of the room, leaving the middle void to walk in. But I, who had nobody to look after me, kept to my rushy pallet under the table for four nights together, in which time I did not put off my clothes; yet, through the merciful goodness of God unto me, I rested and slept well and enjoyed health, without taking cold." [1]

Bridewell was a comparatively comfortable prison; but after about two months the Friends were brought up for trial at the Old Bailey, and on refusing to take the oath, they were all committed to Newgate. Here things were very different, but Ellwood had the great joy of meeting with Edward Burrough, who was already a prisoner there, and whom he calls "my dear friend and father in Christ." He goes on to describe his Newgate experience as follows:—

"When we came there, we found that side of the prison very full of Friends, who were prisoners there before, as indeed were, at that time, all the other parts of that prison, and most of the other prisons about the town; and our addition caused a great throng on that side. Notwithstanding which, we were kindly welcomed by our Friends, whom we found there, and entertained by them, as well as their condition would admit, until we could get in our own accommodations and provide for ourselves.

"We had the liberty of the hall, which is on the first story over the gate and which, in the day-time, is common to all the prisoners on that side, felons as well as others, to walk in and to beg out of; we had also the liberty of some other rooms over that hall, to walk or work in during the day. But at night we all lodged in one room, which was large and round, having in the middle of it a great pillar of oaken timber, which bore up the chapel that is over it. To this pillar we fastened our hammocks at the one end, and to the opposite wall on the other end, quite round the room, and in three degrees, or three stories high, one over the other; so that they who lay in the upper and middle row of hammocks were obliged to go to bed

[1] *Life of Thomas Ellwood*, 1855 edn., pp. 119–123.

first, because they were to climb up to the higher by getting into the lower. And under the lower rank of hammocks, by the wall sides, were laid beds upon the floor, in which the sick, and such weak persons as could not get into the hammocks lay. And indeed, though the room was large and pretty airy, yet the breath from so many bodies . . . packed up so close together, was enough to cause sickness amongst us, and I believe did so; for there were many sick and some very weak. Though we were not long there, yet in that time one of our fellow-prisoners, who lay in one of those pallet beds, died."

It was necessary to hold a coroner's inquest on the dead man, and, amongst others, the turnkey laid hold of "an ancient man, a grave citizen, who was trudging through the gate in great haste," and although he pleaded hard to be excused, they obliged him to serve. The others who had been summoned said: "Come, father, you are the oldest amongst us, you shall be our foreman." And, although he very much disliked having to serve, yet now he was there he was determined to do his duty; and, when the prison officials took him and the rest of the jury to look at the dead prisoner's body in a room downstairs, he refused to give any opinion as to the cause of death, unless they were shown the room in which he died. Thomas Ellwood continues: "By this time it was grown bedtime with us, so that we had taken down our hammocks, which during the day were hung up by the walls, and had made them ready to go into, and were undressing ourselves in readiness to go into them. When, on a sudden, we heard a great noise of tongues and of trampling of feet coming up towards us, and by-and-by one of the turnkeys, opening our door, said: 'Hold, hold, do not undress yourselves, here is the coroner's inquest coming to see you.'

"As soon as they were come to the door, for within the door there was scarce room for them to come, the foreman, who led them, lifting up his hands, said: 'Lord bless me, what a sight is here! I did not think there had been so much cruelty in the hearts of Englishmen, to use Englishmen in this manner! We need not now question,' said he to the rest of the jury, 'how this man came by his death; we may rather wonder that they are not all dead, for this place is enough to breed an infection among them. Well, if it please God to lengthen my

life till to-morrow, I will find means to let the King know how his subjects are dealt with.'

"Whether he did so or no," says Thomas Ellwood, "I cannot tell," but the next day one of the sheriffs came to the press-yard and "spake courteously" to the Quaker prisoners, saying he wished he could set them all at liberty but as that was not in his power he would at least do what he could, and therefore he ordered all those who had been in Bridewell before to go back there, and left the porter of Bridewell to attend to them. This, he said, "will be a better accommodation for you, and your removal will give the more room to those that are left behind."

As soon as the sheriff had left, the porter came up to the prisoners and said that as they knew their way to Bridewell without him, and he could trust them, he should not wait, but would leave them to take their own time, so that they were in before bedtime.

About the middle of the afternoon, therefore, when the streets were full of people and the shopkeepers standing at their doors, a remarkable procession was to be seen of thirty-two prisoners, walking two-and-two abreast, with their bundles of clothing on their shoulders, through the Old Bailey into Fleet Street, and so to Bridewell. Several people stopped them to ask who they were, and where they were going, and when they heard that they were prisoners going from Newgate to Bridewell, exclaimed in astonishment: "What! without a keeper?" "No," replied the Friends, "for our word, which we have given, is our keeper."

At Bridewell they were put into a "low room in a fair court, which had a pump in the middle of it." And here, says Ellwood, "we had the liberty of the court to walk in, and of the pump to wash or drink at. And indeed we might easily have gone quite away if we would, there being a passage through the court into the street; but we were true and steady prisoners, and looked upon this liberty, arising from their confidence in us, to be a kind of parole upon us, so that both conscience and honour stood now engaged for our true imprisonment." [1]

At the end of August 1662, when the Queen first came to London, the King ordered the release of all who were not ring-

[1] *Life of Thomas Ellwood*, 1855 edn., pp. 133–143.

leaders or preachers, and most were set free. Some had already sealed their testimony with their life. Hubberthorne, the Lancashire yeoman, was one of these, and Edward Burrough was left lingering in prison until he was released by death in February 1663. A few days after the King's order clearing the gaols, they were again filled by a raid made on the Bull and Mouth meeting, so violent that the blood ran into the streets and one man was so cudgelled that he died a few days later.

In February 1663, Charles addressed Parliament in favour of toleration, but the Commons, by a large majority, declared against his policy, and began to prepare fresh measures of persecution. A widespread Puritan plot in the North increased the zeal of the authorities, and the fact that one or two, who had once been Quakers, were implicated in it, made it very difficult for Friends to convince the public of their innocence. Howgill, who in the course of active itinerating work, was in the North, was arrested, as well as several others. One very zealous magistrate, Daniel Fleming, of Rydal Hall, was confident that the first real danger would come from the Quakers, "for they are persons the most numerous of any one opinion that are here against us, of the closest correspondencies (keeping constantly their meetings weekly within eight miles one of another throughout all this country [i.e. the Furness district] if not England also), and they are such that will do mischief the most resolutely of any, if Fox or any other of their grand speakers should but dictate it unto them, which some of them half threaten already." He therefore offered a reward of £5 for the capture of Fox, who was taken at Swarthmore in January 1664. Fleming wrote triumphantly to London: "We proceeded smartly against the Quakers: we præmunired one, committed to close gaol George Fox and half a score more for refusing of the Oath of Allegiance, and we fined near three score upon the new Act for unlawful meetings, notwithstanding Mrs. Fell used her utmost endeavours with many of the justices to prevent it." A little later he reports that Mrs. Fell had held a greater meeting than ever at her house on the following Sunday, "on purpose, as 'tis generally thought, to affront our authority."

The outcome was that Margaret Fell was summoned before a special meeting of magistrates at Ulverston. They asked

OLD BRIDEWELL PRISON, LONDON

Where James Nayler, Thomas Ellwood and other Friends were imprisoned. (See pp. 227–231)

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her many questions about the meetings held at her house, and tried to force a promise from her that no more meetings should be held there. To this she replied, that whilst it pleased the Lord to let her have a house, she would in spirit and truth endeavour to worship Him therein. They then tendered her the oath of allegiance, knowing that she would not take it, and on her refusal, committed her forthwith to Lancaster Castle to await trial at the next Assizes.

The Assizes came on in March 1664, and on the day of the trial she appeared at the bar leading little Rachel, her youngest child, by the hand, and surrounded by four of her older daughters. The Judge, Sir Thomas Twisden, courteously ordered the jailer to bring "a cushioned seat for Mistress Fell," and seeing her daughters, he added: "Let not Mistress Fell's daughters stand at the bar, let them come up hither." So the four sisters were seated near the Judge. She pleaded her cause eloquently and well, but as she, of course, refused either to take the oath or to promise to hold no more meetings at Swarthmore, she was threatened with forfeiture of all her property and imprisonment for life. Her reply was: "I must offer and tender my life and all for my testimony, if it be required of me." Whereupon she was led back within the gloomy walls of the old Castle to await further trial. Three times more they brought her to the bar to try and shake her resolution, but all in vain, and finally during the summer Assizes at the end of August, sentence of præmunire was passed against her. This meant that she was declared an outlaw, condemned to imprisonment for life and all her property forfeited to the Crown. But neither her faith nor her courage failed. "The great God of heaven and earth," she says, "supported my spirit under that severe sentence, so that I was not terrified, but gave Judge Turner this answer: 'Although I am out of the King's protection, I am not out of the protection of the Almighty God.'"

This imprisonment lasted for four and a half years, and was accepted by her in a spirit of such quiet confidence that she could write to her eldest daughter: "Dear Margaret, let nothing enter thy mind concerning me, for I am very well content with the work of the Lord . . . let neither murmuring nor repining enter any of your minds . . . let not sorrow fill your hearts,

for we have all cause to rejoice in the Lord evermore, and I most of all." Met in this spirit, her imprisonment proved one of the most fruitful periods of her life, for she wrote more during these years than at any other time.

On the second day of the Assizes, George Fox was brought before the bar, and proved so many errors in his indictment that the Judge was obliged to pronounce him free, but being in a rage, he immediately afterwards started up and said: "I can put the oath to any man here, and I will tender you the oath again." "So," says Fox, "I looked him in the face, and the witness of God started up in him and made him blush. . . . Nevertheless, hardening himself, he caused the oath to be read to me, the jury standing by, and when it was read he asked me whether I would take the oath or not? Then said I: 'Ye have given me a book here to kiss and to swear on, and this book which ye have given me to kiss says: 'Kiss the Son' and the Son says in this book: 'Swear not at all'; and so says also the apostle James. Now, I say as the book says, and yet ye imprison me; how chance ye do not imprison the book for saying so? How comes it that the book is at liberty amongst you, which bids me not swear, and yet ye imprison me for doing as the book bids me? Why don't ye imprison the book?'" This saying went round the country as a byword, but it did not save Fox from imprisonment, for after some more argument he was sent back to prison, Colonel Kirkby ordering the jailer to keep him close for he "was not fit to be discoursed with by men." "So," says Fox, "I was put up in a smoky tower, where the smoke of the other rooms came up and stood as a dew upon the walls, where it rained in also upon my bed; and the smoke was so thick as I could hardly see a candle sometimes, and many times locked under three locks . . . and so starved with cold and rain that my body was almost numbed, and my body swelled with the cold. And many times, when I went to stop out the rain off me in the cold winter season, my shift would be as wet as muck with rain that came in upon me; and as fast as I stopped it the wind being high and fierce would blow it out again; and in this manner did I lie all that long cold winter till the next Assizes."

At the Assizes in March 1665, the new indictment was found to be as full of errors as the first, nevertheless the jury found

him guilty, and he was treated as a præmunired person though not sentenced in open Court, and was sent back to prison. In spite of his bodily weakness, Fox testifies that the Lord's power had enabled him "to do service for Him, and for His Truth and people, as the place would admit," and we read with astonishment that in that miserable room he had "answered several books" and written a paper "Concerning Tithes." This made Colonel Kirkby and others "very uneasy," and they planned to remove him to a remote place where his influence could not be felt. They chose Scarborough Castle, and weak and ill as he was, Fox was sent under military escort across the country and told that he was to be kept there in order that if there was any disturbance in the nation he might be hung over the wall. To this he replied that he was ready, not being afraid of death, and being innocent of all plots.

Here he was kept close prisoner for sixteen months "as a man buried alive" in a small room with "neither chimney nor fire-hearth. This being to the seaside and lying much open, the wind," he says, "drove the rain in forcibly, so that the water came over my bed, and ran about the room, that I was fain to skim it up with a platter. And when my clothes were wet, I had no fire to dry them, so that my body was numbed with cold, and my fingers swelled, that one was grown as big as two." He had to hire a soldier to bring him bread and water, and he says: "Commonly a threepenny loaf served me three weeks, and sometimes longer, and most of my drink was water with wormwood steeped or bruised in it." He was not allowed to see his friends, but had many visits from papists, ministers and others who came to argue with him. In time his innocence and sincerity won him friends, and the Governor pleaded for him in London, where "Esquire Marsh," an old friend of Fox's, for whose liberty he "would have gone a hundred miles barefoot," procured an order from the King for his release. The order was carried down to Scarborough by John Whitehead, the old soldier, who was garrisoned at Scarborough Castle at the time of his convincement, and who must have felt jubilant over his errand. Fox was set free on September 1, 1666, none too soon, for he could hardly have survived another winter under such conditions. He had won this testimony from the officers

and soldiers: "He is as stiff as a tree and as pure as a bell, for we could never stir him."

The third important prisoner taken in the North in 1663—Francis Howgill—was præmunired at Appleby about the same time as Margaret Fell and George Fox. He lay in the prison on the old bridge at Appleby, "stuffed up for want of air, and at the mercy of a tyrannous jailer," until his death in January 1669. He behaved himself "as a man wholly given up into the will of God," and won the affection of many in the town.

The public could not get rid of the idea that all conventicles and meetings of Nonconformists were dangerous places where people spent their time in hatching plots and insurrection, and when Parliament met in 1664 numerous petitions came up urging the passing of measures for the "prevention of all danger from Quakers and other fanatics." The result was the Conventicle Act of 1664, which was in effect the Quaker Act, with added penalties, and extended to all Nonconformists.

It began by declaring that St. 35 Eliz. cap. 1 was still in force. This Act provided that any person, over sixteen, present at an unlawful conventicle (i.e. any meeting under colour of religion in other manner than allowed by the Liturgy, at which there were five or more persons present besides the household), should conform within three months or forfeit his estate and abjure the realm. If he refused, he should suffer death as a felon without benefit of clergy. The Quaker Act had required a jury, but now two justices could convict and imprison, and the mere refusal of a judicial oath was to be regarded as a conviction, incurring the penalty of transportation.

Under this Act *all* Nonconformists were put to a severe test. Baxter tells us that when only the *ministers* had suffered, the people had been very courageous, and had encouraged them to preach till they went to prison; but when they themselves had to go, their opinions changed, and they decided that it was better to preach often in private to a few than once or twice in public to many. Some were even afraid to ask a blessing on their food if more than four persons came in to dine with them. "But," adds Baxter, "here the fanatics called Quakers did greatly relieve the sober people for a time: for they were so resolute, and gloried in their constancy and sufferings, that they assembled openly, at the Bull and Mouth, near Aldersgate, and were

dragged away daily to the common gaol, and yet desisted not, but the rest came the next day nevertheless, so that the gaol at Newgate was filled with them. Abundance of them died in prison, and yet they continued their assemblies still! And the poor deluded souls would sometimes meet only to sit still in silence, when, as they said, the Spirit did not speak, and it was a great question whether this silence was a religious exercise not allowed by the Liturgy, etc. . . . Yea, many turned Quakers, because the Quakers kept their meetings openly and went to prison for it cheerfully."

"The records prove," says W. C. Braithwaite, "that Baxter is right, and that the Friends bore the brunt of the persecution." Out of 909 convictions in Middlesex, outside the city, from July 24, 1664, to December 31, 1665, no fewer than 859, or 94½ per cent. are for attendance at Quaker meetings. In the City itself, the meeting at the Bull and Mouth was the centre of persecution, and on the Surrey side Friends were taken from their meeting at Horslydown within two days of the coming into force of the new Act. Within a year there had been 2,100 imprisonments on account of attendance at five London meetings. The sentences were usually light on the first and second offences, not out of mercy to the prisoners, but so as to lead more quickly to transportation. Six weeks after the Act came into force there were nine cases at Hertford Assizes ripe for banishment. The Judge was Sir Orlando Bridgeman, an upright and moderate man, but one who was imbued with the common idea that a silent Friends' meeting was a dangerous hot-bed of sedition, and he therefore charged the jury: "That if you find or believe in your hearts that they were in the meeting under colour of religion in their way, though they sat still only and looked upon each other, seeing they cannot say what they did there, it was an unlawful meeting and their use and practice not according to the Liturgy of the Church of England . . . for we have had late experience of the danger of such meetings under colour of religion, and it is an easy matter at such meetings to conspire and consult mischief."

Eight of the nine Friends were sentenced to banishment, and seven of them were put on board the *Ann*, of London, for this purpose, but the master, being detained by adverse winds

for nearly two months, at last put them ashore at Deal, with a certificate, stating that the hand of the Lord was against him, and that his men refused to make the voyage if they carried the Quakers. The Friends immediately returned to London and told the King what had happened. An Order in Council was then made for securing them until some ship could be found to take them, and under this they remained prisoners until the Great Pardon of 1672. They found twenty-one other Friends under a similar sentence and five more joined them, thus making 34 who were sentenced to banishment from Hertfordshire alone, and we must remember that the same thing was taking place in other parts of the country.

In London and Middlesex 109 men and 44 women Friends were condemned to banishment, and it is noteworthy that so far as can be ascertained, none but Quakers received this sentence either in London or elsewhere; it was the Quakers alone who continued to meet openly, even to the third offence, thus braving the Act and arousing a strong public sentiment in their favour. Ship-masters and sailors were unwilling to carry them, and there was some talk of transporting the accumulation of London Quakers in a prize ship. At last, however, a man named Fudge, master of the *Black Eagle*, whose ship lay below Greenwich, in Bugby's Hole, agreed to take them to the West Indies, but as the sailors refused to help, and the Quakers passively resisted, only four were at first put on board and the rest had to be sent back to Newgate. A fortnight later soldiers from the Tower were called in, and by dint of shoving, kicking and dragging, they got all the Quakers on board, amongst them eighteen women. Again the ship was hindered from sailing, and the plague being now very bad in the City (for this was August 1665), it was carried to the ship and broke out among the prisoners. They lay in Bugby's Hole for seven weeks, and during that time George Whitehead visited the ship and held a meeting on board. Soon after the plague broke out in the City he had felt called by the Lord to go and work there, and took up his abode at a tobacconist's in Watling Street. Here he lived all through those terrible months, visiting and relieving Friends in prison and in their own homes. Gilbert Latey, the former court tailor, and Ellis Hookes, the Clerk to Friends, were equally courageous and all survived the ordeal, although

Gilbert Latey caught the infection in October. "The Lord," we are told, "was good unto him, and having further service for him to do, raised him up again."

When at last the banished Friends reached Dover, in January 1666, only twenty-seven were still alive, and off the Land's End the ship was taken by a Dutch privateer, which carried them to Holland, where they were soon set at liberty, and were given a passport and a certificate stating that they had not made an escape, but were sent back. Friends at Amsterdam entertained them kindly and in time all of them, except one who was a Dutchman, returned safely to England. "Thus," says Sewel, "the banished were delivered, and the design of their persecutors was brought to nought by an Almighty hand."

George Fox had realized when the Conventicle Act was passed that it formed a crisis, not only in the history of Friends, but of the whole nation, and had written to his followers: "Now is the time for you to stand, you that have been public men [that is, ministers], and formerly did travel abroad; mind and keep up your testimony, go into your meeting-houses as at other times," and Friends seem to have followed his advice, behaving with such splendid courage that they won the admiration even of many who did not sympathize with their views. They were deterred neither by fear of the plague nor of banishment. When the Bull and Mouth was boarded up they met in the street, and in spite of all difficulties, by the end of 1665 we hear that meetings were very large "of strange faces and good honest countenances, who with exceeding hungerings received the Truth."

It is especially worthy to be recorded that it was not only the older Friends who thus stood the test of persecution; the children in some meetings were equally brave and faithful. A Reading Friend, in a letter to George Fox, dated January 15, 1665, says: "Our little children kept the meetings up when we were all in prison, notwithstanding their wicked justice, when he came and found them there, with a staff that he had, with a spear in it, would pull them out of the meeting, and punch them in the back, till some of them have been black in the face. I cannot much enlarge; his fellow, I believe, is not to be found in England [as] a Justice of the Peace."

W. C. Braithwaite sums up the situation by saying: "The

Quakers, almost singlehanded, had fought and vanquished the Conventicle Act in London. In the country its impotence, so far as Friends were concerned, was quickly realized, and the sentences of banishment on the third offence were relatively few. . . . In the summer of 1665 Sir John Lowther was lamenting from Cumberland that through 'the want of the executive part, transportation, our good intentions stand us in little stead.' The weapon had broken in the hands of the persecutors. Friends everywhere continued to hold their meetings as though no persecuting Act were in being. They braved the storm and weathered it triumphantly." [1]

[1] *The Second Period of Quakerism*, p. 50.

CHAPTER XVI

FURTHUR PERSECUTION AND THE DAWN OF TOLERATION

"Were it not in love to you and pity (in relation to what will certainly befall you if ye go on in this course), I could say in the joy of my heart, and in the sense of the good-will of my God to us, Who suffereth these things to come to pass: go on, try it out with the Spirit of the Lord, come forth with your laws, and prisons, and spoiling of our goods and banishment, and death (if the Lord please) and see if ye can carry it: for we come not forth against you in our own wills, or in any enmity against your persons or government, or in any stubbornness or refractoriness of spirit; but with the lamb-like nature which the Lord our God hath begotten in us, which is taught and enabled by Him, both to do His will, and to suffer for His name's sake. And if we cannot thus overcome you (even in patience of spirit, and in love to you) and if the Lord our God choose not to appear for us, we are content to be overcome by you. So the Will of the Lord be done, saith my soul."—EXTRACT FROM A LETTER FROM ISAAC PENINGTON TO THE KING AND PARLIAMENT, END OF 1665: SEWEL'S *History of the Quakers*, folio edn., pp. 447–448.

IN 1667 the Dutch entered the Medway and the blame for this national humiliation fell upon Clarendon, who was consequently driven into disgrace and exile. Early in 1668 negotiations were set on foot for possible toleration, and, although this was opposed by Parliament, there was a lull in the persecution and a travelling Friend, John Banks, writes: "Meetings are very large, peaceable and quiet almost everywhere, and a great calm there now is, whatever will be the end thereof the Lord knoweth."

But although there was a growing feeling in the country in favour of toleration, and the King was anxious for it, the Church and also most of the magistrates had a great fear of conventicles, and at last in 1669 they persuaded the King to support them in framing fresh measures of persecution. Archbishop Sheldon diligently collected statistics and prepared a new and more efficient Conventicle Act. When Parliament met in February 1670 the *speeches* in the Commons were in favour of toleration, but the *votes* approved the Bill by 138 to 78. Marvell calls this Act

"the quintessence of arbitrary malice," and it was to be enforced without the safeguard of a jury. There were several new penalties. Any person preaching at a conventicle was to be fined £20 for a first and £40 for any further offence, and any one harbouring a conventicle was to be fined £20. A single Justice could convict, and those who refused to enforce the law were fined £100, half of which went to the Informer. Transportation, however, was not included, the aim of the Act being to ruin the offender rather than to imprison him. Sheldon seems honestly to have believed that he had done God service by framing this Act, and wrote to the bishops: "I have this confidence under God, that . . . we shall within a few months . . . see so great an alteration in the distractions of these times, as that the seduced people returning from their seditious and self-serving teachers to the unity of the Church and uniformity in God's service, it will be to the glory of God, the welfare of the Church, the praise of His Majesty's Government and the happiness of the whole kingdom."

For a time the new Act was openly defied, and this led to an order being made for pulling down the seats and pulpits in all the meeting-houses in London, Bristol and other places, and on June 19th the Governor of the Tower reported that "there was no Quaker nor any sect else had any preaching in their public places in the City this day." About this time the Bishop of London began sending his clergy to the nonconformist meeting-places, including the new Quaker meeting-house in Gracechurch Street. Whilst the clergyman read the common-prayer and preached from the gallery, the Friends held their meeting in the street outside. On August 14th a meeting of several thousand people was thus held in Gracechurch Street. John Rous, who was present, tells us that "by reason of the multitude of rude people who came mostly to gaze, it was more like a tumult than a solid assembly," and that William Penn was the chief speaker. Whilst Penn was speaking some watchmen and musketeers came to take him away, but could not get at him for the press, so to prevent further disturbance he promised to go to them when the meeting was over and this he did together with a newly convinced Friend named William Meade, an old soldier of the Commonwealth, who had been standing by his side.

The trial which followed in September at the Old Bailey has become famous because of the resolute attitude taken by the

jury, who refused to be browbeaten by the Bench into returning a verdict contrary to their judgment and consciences. Both the prisoners pleaded "not guilty." The witnesses gave their evidence honestly, stating that they knew very little of Meade, but had *seen* Penn speaking though they could not hear what he said. Penn, who had studied law to some purpose, made an able defence, in the course of which he declared that all the powers upon earth should not prevent him from worshipping God and demanded production of the law which he was said to have broken. Upon this he was rudely thrust into the bail-dock whither Meade soon followed him for explaining to the jury the Common Law definition of a riot which the Recorder had refused to give. The case was then summed up in the absence of the prisoners who protested in the distance. Although threatened by the Bench, the jury only found Penn "guilty of speaking in Gracechurch Street," which of course was no crime, and when the Court refused the verdict, they repeated it in writing and found Meade "not guilty." Then the Court adjourned till next morning, the jury being locked up with the threat that they should have neither "meat, drink, fire nor tobacco," until they should give a verdict which the Court would accept. As the Court broke up, Penn said to his jury: "You are Englishmen: mind your privilege: give not away your right," and Edward Bushell, who was the most steadfast of them all, replied: "Nor will we ever do it."

When the Court met again at seven o'clock on Sunday morning, the jury simply repeated their verdict. The Recorder and the Lord Mayor were furious, the Recorder threatening to keep his eye upon Bushell and the Lord Mayor declaring that he would slit his nose. Here Penn interfered to defend the rights of juries. "It is intolerable," he said, "that my jury should be thus menaced. Is this according to the fundamental laws? Are not they my proper judges by the Great Charter of England? What hope is there of ever having justice done, when juries are threatened and their verdicts rejected?

Recorder (*to the Lord Mayor*): My Lord, you must take a course with that same fellow.

Lord Mayor: Stop his mouth, gaoler; bring fetters and stake him to the ground.

Penn: Do your pleasure; I matter not your fetters.

Recorder: Till now I never understood the reason of the

policy and prudence of the Spaniards, in suffering the Inquisition among them. And certainly it will never be well with us till something like the Spanish Inquisition be in England.

Jury (*to the Bench*) : We ought not to be returned, having all agreed and set our hands to the verdict.

Recorder : Your verdict is nothing ; you play upon the Court. I say you shall go together and bring in another verdict, or you shall starve, and I will have you carted about the City as in Edward the Third's time.

Foreman : We have given in our verdict, and all agreed to it ; and, if we give in another, it will be a force upon us to save our lives.

After this the jury were locked up again to endure another night of cold and hunger and raging thirst ; but it failed to break their spirits, and on Monday morning, although faint and weak from their privations, they returned a unanimous verdict of "Not Guilty." Hereupon, Penn tells us, "the Bench were amazed and the whole Court so satisfied that they made a kind of hymn."

The Recorder, angry that he could not force them, said to the jury : "I am sorry, Gentlemen, you have followed your own judgments and opinions, rather than the good and wholesome advice which was given you ; God keep my life out of your hands, but for this the Court fines you forty marks a man, and imprisonment till paid." Penn then stepped up towards the Bench and said : "I demand my liberty, being freed by the jury."

Mayor : No ; you are in for your fines.

Penn : Fines for what ?

Mayor : For contempt of Court.

So prisoners and jury alike were sent off to Newgate until their fines should be paid, but not without this final protest from Penn : "I can never urge the fundamental laws of England, but you cry : 'Take him away, take him away.' But 'tis no wonder, since the Spanish Inquisition hath so great a place in the Recorders' heart."

The jury made up their minds to stay in prison until they could be legally released without paying their fine, and began by demanding their liberty every six hours. Then they brought an action against the Recorder for unjust imprisonment and the case came before the Court of Common Pleas in November.

They were admitted to bail, and, after a year of suspense, the final victory was won. The whole body of judges decided unanimously that no jury could be fined for its verdict, and Baxter tells us that when the Lord Chief Justice delivered this judgment, "never thing since the King's return was received with greater joy and applause by the people."

Bushell and his fellow-jurymen deserve all honour for the firmness and courage with which they insisted on the right of Englishmen to free trial by jury and the decision in *Bushell's Case*, as it is called, has become one of the bulwarks of English liberty.

From this time forward William Penn's adherence to Quakerism proved a great strength to the movement. He understood the laws; and whilst he never shrank from suffering, if to escape it meant compromise or denial of his faith, he was as determined as the apostle Paul to claim the right of citizenship in a free country, and this not only for himself, but for his fellow members. His high position gave him great influence at Court. Admiral Penn on his deathbed had written asking King Charles and his brother the Duke of York to continue to his son the kindness they had shown him, and in reply the Duke of York promised to act as guardian and protector of William Penn's estate. Penn had, therefore, unusual opportunities of intercourse with the King and others in important positions, and he used his influence untiringly and unselfishly in the interests of religious liberty.

As Friends refused to abandon their meetings, orders were given to pull down their meeting-houses in London, and a few examples of what took place may be of interest. At the end of July, the King's Surveyor, the celebrated Christopher Wren, was directed by an Order in Council to pull down the meeting-house at Horslydown, and we are told that "a party of soldiers came with carpenters and others and pulled down the meeting-house and carried away the boards, windows, benches, and forms, and sold them." Next day the Friends met upon the ruins, and week by week, although shamefully ill-treated, they continued to meet, from twenty to fifty persons being "wounded and sorely bruised" each time, until at last in February 1671 the authorities were convinced that no human power nor any penalties could deter the Friends from attending.

Ratcliff meeting, which to the present day is held upon the

old site, was the scene of an equally heroic passive resistance. In August, Sir John Robinson, Governor of the Tower, sent a company of soldiers, who carried off twelve cartloads of doors, windows and other plunder, and sold or bartered away the rest on the spot. Friends continued to meet notwithstanding, and set to work to rebuild as soon as persecution slackened.

Wheeler Street meeting-house was saved from a similar fate by Gilbert Latey, in whose name the title stood, and who put in a poor Friend as tenant, thus making the house a dwelling-house, stopping Sir John's designs, and forming a useful precedent for the future.

In some parts of the country a great deal of trouble was caused by Informers, who, out of malice, or for the sake of the reward, spied upon Friends and often accused them falsely. Public opinion, however, was usually against them, as at Welshpool, where a man boasted that he would inform against Richard Davies, the Quaker hatter, for preaching in the gaol, where he and other Friends were prisoners. The townsmen said that it was bad enough to have their peaceable neighbours in prison, without ruining them to benefit scoundrels, and they refused to have any dealings with such a rascal, one man threatening to cut off his ear. In Derbyshire, John Gratton was fined twenty pounds for preaching, but his neighbours came and took his best goods to their own homes for safe custody, and when the rest were put up for sale, they wished all manner of evil to anyone who should buy, so that none were sold. Two Informers who came out of Norfolk to Colchester, and informed against a meeting, were so stoned by the rabble that they asked the mayor where they could find a safe lodging. He replied that he "knew nowhere safer than in the town gaol, so thither they went and got away very early in the morning, and never came more to disturb Friends."

All this persecution was contrary to the King's wishes, and indeed if the question of toleration could have been dissociated from the memories of Puritan rule on the one hand, and from fears of Roman Catholic domination on the other, twenty years of suffering and struggle might have been avoided, and the names of the later Stuart Kings might have been handed down as the founders of toleration in England. The nation, however, and especially the English Church, was very suspicious of any favour shewn to the Roman Catholics, whilst Charles's sympathies were all in that

direction. Since the fall of Clarendon he had been advised by the so-called Cabal, which was composed partly of secret Catholics, and partly of easy-going Protestants.

In 1670 he signed the secret Treaty of Dover, by which he agreed in return for a large sum of money to declare himself a Roman Catholic and to support Louis XIV in his war against Holland. In 1672 he fulfilled his promise of declaring war against the Dutch, having three days earlier issued a Declaration of Indulgence which suspended all the penal laws against Non-conformists, and granted freedom to Protestant Dissenters to worship publicly in appointed places and to Catholics to meet in private houses.

This Declaration threw the whole country into a state of alarm. The idea of toleration for Roman Catholics was regarded with detestation and everyone felt that the King had exceeded his prerogative. Many Dissenters refused to avail themselves of a privilege which they considered illegal, and which must be shared with Papists. In 1673 the King's need for money forced him to summon Parliament. He found it determined against any tampering with its legislative powers in the interests, as it believed, of Roman Catholics, and he was reluctantly obliged to yield and broke the seal of the Declaration with his own hand.

The year's respite had, however, done much. Licences had been granted to 1500 preachers and to even more preaching places and the enemies of toleration declared that the Declaration "was the greatest blow that ever was given, since the king's restoration, to the Church of England; all Sectaries by this means repairing publicly to their meetings and conventicles, insomuch that all the laws and care of their execution against these Separatists afterwards could never bring them back to due conformity." The ground which had been won was not easily lost, and very few of the licences were revoked until 1673, when Charles broke off his alliance with France, and by the passing of the Test Act allied himself with the English Church party.

The Quakers had taken advantage of the policy of toleration to plead for their imprisoned Friends. George Whitehead, Thomas Moore, of Reigate and Thomas Green collected the names of 491 persons, mostly Friends, but including a few others, amongst them John Bunyan. In the list were 125 præmunired persons and sixty under sentence of banishment and as each one of the

491 names was repeated eleven times, the document was very lengthy and Ellis Hookes, the Clerk to Friends, had no small task in copying it out three times over before it was finally signed and sealed. The original on eleven skins of vellum, with the Great Seal attached is preserved in the Friends' Reference Library at Devonshire House, Bishopsgate, London

When it was signed George Whitehead had two duplicate copies made and sent them round to the prisons all over the country. He himself with two other Friends, went on horseback through the Eastern Counties carrying the original, tied across his saddle in a leather case, with the tin box for the Great Seal hanging from it. What joy they must have brought wherever they came! But even at the end of a year, when the work was completed, Ellis Hookes had the names of about fifty Friends who were still in prison owing to the carelessness of the officials, who had sent up the returns.

The Test Act was directed against the Catholics, and excluded from office all who refused to abjure the doctrine of transubstantiation. Its first results were that the Duke of York ceased to be Lord High Admiral of England and that the Cabal was broken up. Charles's new minister, Sir Thomas Osborne, was made Earl of Danby and he rallied many good Englishmen to the Tory party by professing enmity towards France, and by arranging the marriage of the Duke of York's daughter, Mary, to William of Orange, the champion of Protestant Europe against the designs of Louis XIV. In spite of this the Whigs continued to suspect Charles of Papist intrigue and although they could prove nothing, the remainder of his reign was a time of unrest and suspicion.

Friends on the whole, kept out of political life. They were agreed in condemning plots and in advocating just and righteous government, and were encouraged by their meetings to make a wise and careful use of their powers as electors, but further than this they did not go. Most of them felt that the truest service they could render to their country was to shew by consistent witness and patient suffering that conscience is a higher court of appeal than unjust laws and this testimony they maintained unflinchingly to the end. William Penn was almost alone, amongst Friends, in taking part in the politics of his day, and when in 1679 he threw himself heartily into helping at the election of his friend, Algernon

Sidney, his activities did not meet with general approval from his fellow-members.

During these later years of Charles II's reign, party strife raged hotly round the succession to the throne, and England was more than once on the verge of civil war. In order to keep the power in his own hands Charles curtailed the liberties of Parliament, and by the help of the Church and of French gold, had made himself absolute, when in 1685 he died, and his brother James succeeded to the throne. James was an ardent Catholic, and the fear of Roman Catholic despotism alienated the Tory and Church party and made it possible for the Whigs to gain a victory for Protestantism, a free Parliament and religious toleration by bringing in William and Mary.

But before this final victory was won, another violent storm of persecution fell upon the unoffending Friends. The alliance with the Tory Church party and with France, whereby Charles II had purchased his absolute power, meant that he must acquiesce in a renewal of persecution, and the campaign in favour of the Duke of Monmouth and the Rye House Plot of 1683, furnished fresh excuses for hunting down Dissenters.

Bristol, as the capital of the West, which had welcomed Monmouth, was one of the places that suffered most severely. About two-thirds of its inhabitants were Dissenters, and although Friends had already passed through two periods of persecution in the city, one in 1655 and another in 1663, this third one is said to have been the most violent of all.

There were two Quaker meeting-houses at Bristol, the Friars and Temple Street, and in the winter of 1681–2 these were pillaged and seized for the King, under pretence of fining the owners for not sending a soldier to the train-bands. By June 1682 there were so many Bristol Friends in prison that the meetings were kept up chiefly by the children. On the 18th of June six boys were taken from Temple Street meeting and put in the stocks for an hour and about thirty children imprisoned. "On the 7th of July," we read, "they dispersed the meeting, which then consisted chiefly of children, for the men and women being generally in prison, the children kept up their meetings regularly, and with a remarkable gravity and composure. It was surprising to see the manly courage and constancy with which some of the boys behaved on this occasion, keeping close to meetings in the absence of their

parents, and undergoing on that account many abuses with patience.

"On the 16th, Tilly caused five of the boys to be set in the stocks three quarters of an hour. On the 23rd, eight of the boys were put in the stocks two hours and a-half. On the 30th, about fifty-five [children] were at the meeting, when Helliar, with a twisted whalebone stick, beat many of them unmercifully, striking them violent blows on their heads, necks and faces, few of them escaping without some marks of his fury.

"On the 3rd of the month called August, Tilly, with a small faggot stick, beat many of the children, but they bore it patiently and cheerfully. On the 6th, he beat some of them with a whalebone stick, and sent four boys to Bridewell, who were released in the evening with threats of whipping if they met together again. He also sent eleven boys and four girls to Bridewell, till a Friend engaged for their appearance next day before the Deputy-Mayor, who endeavoured both by persuasions and threats to make them promise to come at no more meetings; but the children in that respect were unmovable. Wherefore, they were sent to Bridewell again, Helliar, to terrify them, charging the keeper to provide at new cat-o'-nine-tails against next morning. . . . The boys and girls were mostly from ten to twelve years of age."

From 1682 to 1685 the gaol and the Bridewell at Bristol were so crowded with Quakers that it was customary for intentions of marriage to be notified to Friends in prison before being passed. The leading Bristol Friends were in Newgate, whence they wrote triumphantly to their fellow-members at London Yearly Meeting: "In these things they [i.e. our persecutors] have no conquest nor glory, thus to oppress the innocent, even in their prison, where they have us thus thrust in heaps. But in this is our rejoicing that they cannot keep God from us."

In 1683 the Act of Elizabeth, with its ultimate death penalty was put in force against Richard Vickris, a leading Quaker merchant of Bristol, and he lay for many months in prison awaiting execution, but he was at last released through William Penn's influence with the Duke of York.

When James II came to the throne in 1685, there were 1383 Friends in prison, and one hundred had died in prison during the preceding five years. The detailed account of the sufferings in London closes with a list of sixty-five men and twenty-one women

ministers, who were worthy of special honour, "esteeming no worldly interest too near or dear to part with, that they might be found in a faithful discharge of their duty."

On James's accession, his declaration that he would defend Church and State as by law established was generally accepted as meaning that he would not allow his creed to affect his public policy; but he had already shown himself willing to risk his crown for his faith, and he held to his course regardless of consequences. Friends drew up a petition, praying for the release of 1460 Quaker prisoners, but their efforts were hampered by suspicions that Friends in the West had been concerned in the Monmouth Rebellion. One Friend had, in fact, sold horses to the Duke, and two others seem to have been implicated, but these were "dealt with" or disowned, and, as a body, Friends were true to their testimony against plots, and were careful to show their loyalty. In March, 1686, the King issued a General Pardon to all his subjects, also a special warrant, releasing many Friends and discharging their fines, and under this William Dewsbury was probably set free from his last long imprisonment at Warwick.

The arbitrary government which Charles II had established and handed on to his brother, made it easy for James to carry out his designs in favour of Catholicism without a check. He took for his adviser, Father Edward Petre, a Jesuit, and "went on faster than formerly in promoting the Roman Catholic religion." In particular, he made free use of his power to dispense with the Tests and many Roman Catholics were promoted to office. Parliament was prorogued several times, and at last in July 1687 was dissolved. In April of the same year James had issued a Declaration of Indulgence "by virtue of our royal prerogative . . . making no doubt of the concurrence of our two Houses of Parliament, when we shall think it convenient for them to meet." This Declaration purported to remove all religious tests for civil or military offices, and in it, whilst regretting that his subjects were not all Catholics, he declared that it was his settled conviction that conscience should not be forced, and announced the immediate suspension of all Penal Laws.

This Indulgence was without doubt a high-handed act which violated the whole spirit of English institutions, nevertheless we cannot be suprised that many Dissenters, and especially the Quakers, welcomed it thankfully as a relief from the long and cruel persecu-

tion they had suffered. Parliament, which should have safeguarded their liberties, had acted according to the dictates of a narrow-minded Church party, curtailing their freedom and authorizing penalty after penalty to be used against them, until they were wholly at the mercy of a horde of Informers and were denied by law the common rights of Englishmen. Little wonder that they feared the despotism of Parliament more than the prerogative of the King! They could trust neither Church nor Parliament, but they had some faith in the King. They had always stood for liberty of conscience and believed that so good a principle must have good results.

Penn was very active at this time in helping the King, with whom he had many confidential interviews. He neither realized nor believed in any real danger from the Roman Catholics of whom he estimated that there were only about 30,000 in England out of a population of 8,000,000, and he honestly tried to persuade the country to follow up the King's Indulgence by an Act of Parliament. The nation, however, mistrusted the King's intentions and welcomed a manifesto from William and Mary which declared that they were against persecution and willing to grant full liberty to Dissenters, but that they could not agree to remove the Tests which guarded the Protestant religion.

In April 1688, James reissued his Declaration of Indulgence and directed that it should be read in all churches and chapels on two successive Sundays. This was the signal for fresh alarm and strengthened the general determination to frustrate the King's supposed designs. The "Seven Bishops" sent in a petition to the King and flatly refused to obey. Most of the clergy followed their example. On the 8th of June the Bishops were committed to the Tower and the famous trial followed. On June 30th amid general rejoicings they were acquitted, and the same night the invitation to William and Mary was signed. Penn acted throughout as a wise friend to James. He advised him against ordering the Declaration to be read, opposed the imprisonment of the Bishops, and when on June 10th a son was born to James, he urged their release in honour of the event. But his counsels were disregarded and the birth of an heir only hastened the revolution.

Friends issued an address of thanks to James for the liberty granted by the Declaration. They conclude with the words: "As we firmly believe that God will never desert this just and

righteous cause of liberty, nor the King in maintaining of it, so we hope by God's grace to let the world see we can honestly and heartily appear for liberty of conscience, and be inviolably true to our own religion, whatever the folly or malice of some men on that account may suggest to the contrary." Sewel says that these words were intended to encourage Friends not to shrink from supporting liberty of conscience because of the misconstructions that would be placed on their actions ; but however that may be, Friends generally, and William Penn in particular, were often suspected of being Jesuits or at least Papists in disguise, and Penn found it necessary to write a "Vindication" of his conduct, explaining that he had been actuated solely by personal friendship for the King, and zeal for liberty of conscience.

William of Orange landed at Torbay on November 5, 1688, and during the fateful weeks that followed, Penn, as a royal favourite was more than ever under suspicion. He was arrested, but nothing could be proved against him, and he was allowed to return to his home in the country. One of the first acts of the new reign was the passing of the Toleration Act, which voiced the Englishman's conviction that conscience could not be forced, and although Friends had little to do with the actual passing of the Act, it may be regarded as proof that they had not suffered in vain, for their endurance had convinced the nation of the injustice and uselessness of laws for controlling men's beliefs. As W. C. Braithwaite puts it : "From each stroke of persecution an appeal rang to something greater than the law, the conscience of England. In thirty years the intolerance of Church and State had effected a greater advance in the rights of conscience than was gained by the next hundred years of toleration." [1]

[1] *The Second Period of Quakerism*, p. 158.

CHAPTER XVII

THREE QUAKER WRITERS

"To us the experience reached by the early Friends is the thing that matters. Below the scholastic surface of Barclay's writings, we shall seek to penetrate to the deep ocean of Divine life in which he found peace and strength, and to know for ourselves the secret power which touched his heart as he came into the silent assemblies of God's people. Or, with Penington, the Quaker mystic, we shall wait for those inwelling tides which carried him forth into the larger life hid with Christ in God."—W. C. BRAITHWAITE, *The Second Period of Quakerism*, pp. 396–397.

ALLUSION has been made in previous chapters to some of the disturbing elements which had at times threatened the life of the Quaker fellowship from within. The scandal and misunderstandings caused by James Nayler's delusions, John Perrot's dividing spirit, and the still more serious Wilkinson and Story controversy, all made Friends realize that whilst the testimony of the life is the thing that matters most, a clear statement of doctrine is nevertheless important. Friends had from the first been keen disputants, always ready to defend themselves, or even to attack their opponents, in voluminous pamphlets, written in the bitter and often apocalyptic style of the controversial literature of the day; but it became increasingly evident that something more than this was needed, and we are indebted especially to three men, Isaac Penington, William Penn, and Robert Barclay, for setting forth a clear statement of the Quaker position in language and with arguments which appealed to scholars and thinkers.

These men were not among the "First Publishers of Truth"; but they and some others stood nobly side by side with the original band, sharing both their labours and their sufferings, and it is fitting that some brief record of their lives should find a place in the sketch which we are endeavouring to draw of the "Beginnings of Quakerism."

The story of Isaac Penington's convincement is one of the best illustrations in our Quaker annals of the way in which the message of the inward Christ answered the need in the hearts of many eager seekers after Truth. He was born in 1616 and was the eldest son of Sir Isaac Penington, one of Charles I's judges and an important man under the Commonwealth. He was brought up in the strictest sect of the Puritans, but became conscious that their religious profession consisted only in words, and was wanting in the life and power which the early disciples knew.

He became a "Seeker," and meeting with a few Friends began sometimes to attend meetings, where he heard "words of truth from the Spirit of Truth, which reached his heart and conscience," and caused him to say: "This is He, this is He, there is no other: this is He whom I have waited for and sought after from my childhood, who was always near me, and had often begotten life in my heart, but I knew Him not distinctly, nor how to receive Him or dwell with Him."

His writings shew us that his had been a lifelong quest, and when he found that for which he sought, it was to him as the pearl of great price for which he was willing gladly to give up all. In his own glowing and mystical language he tells his experience: "Some," he says, "may desire to know what I have at last met with. I answer: 'I have met with the seed.'[1] Understand that word, and thou wilt be satisfied, and inquire no further. I have met with my God, I have met with my Saviour, and He hath not been present with me without His salvation, but I have felt the healings drop upon my soul from under His wings. I have met with the true knowledge, the knowledge of life, the living knowledge, the knowledge which is life; and this hath had the true virtue in it, which my soul hath rejoiced in, in the presence of the Lord."

He was a man of fine literary talent, and was the first to begin the more adequate written presentment of Quakerism to the world, which was continued a few years later by Penn and Barclay. His writings are the expression of his own personal experiences, and W. C. Braithwaite says of them that, "in spite of their unsystematic character and their serious limitations of thought,

[1] "By 'seed' he meant a part of God's nature, capable of growth, which was brought into the heart of man."—W. C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnngs of Quakerism*, p. 505.

they afford the best clue that the Quakerism of the seventeenth century had to give of its religious faith."

His wife, Mary Penington, had passed through a very similar religious experience. When very young, she had married Sir William Springett, who was equally dissatisfied with the professions of the day. We are told that they scrupled many things then in common use, such as the use of a wedding ring, singing David's Psalms in metre and the use of forms of prayer. They were also "brought off" from the bread and wine, "nor did baptism with water answer the cry of their hearts." About this time Sir William died, and when soon afterwards their child was born, the young mother would not allow her to be baptized. This was in 1643 and for twelve years she pursued her solitary quest. At one time, she tells us, "I went from simplicity into notions, and I changed my ways often from one notion to another, not finding satisfaction." She had been a Puritan, zealous in what were called the "duties," keeping the Sabbath, fasting often, praying in private thrice a day, hearing sermons and "lectures" daily, and reading much in Scripture. Then in her weariness of heart, she abandoned all religious exercises, giving up their use both in her family and in private. In this state of unrest, she married in 1654 her second husband, Isaac Penington, and a few years later "both found in the Quaker experience of an indwelling Christ that for which their souls had been thirsting."

It was in their home at Chalfont Grange that Thomas Ellwood, whose *Life* gives us some of our most vivid pictures of early Quaker history, first came to know Friends. He and his father, Walter Ellwood, had made the acquaintance of Lady Springett and her daughter in London, several years before her marriage with Isaac Penington, and the friendship had been kept up by occasional visits. Hearing that the Peningtons had removed to Buckinghamshire, the two Ellwoods went one day to visit them and were very much surprised to find that they had become Quakers, "a people," says Thomas Ellwood, "we had no knowledge of, and a name we had till then scarcely heard of. So great a change," he continues, "from a free, debonair, and courtly sort of behaviour, which we formerly had found them in, to so strict a gravity as they now received us with, did not a little amuse and disappoint our expectation of such a pleasant visit as we used to have. . . . For my part, I sought, and at length found means

THE OLD TOLBOOTH PRISON, EDINBURGH

Where David Barclay was imprisoned, and during his imprisonment "convinced" through the teaching of his fellow-prisoner, John Swinton

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to cast myself into the company of the daughter, whom I found gathering flowers in the garden, attended by her maid, who was also a Quaker. But when I addressed myself to her after my accustomed manner, with intention to engage her in some discourse which might introduce conversation, on the ground of our former acquaintance, though she treated me with a courteous mien, yet, young as she was, the gravity of her look and behaviour struck such an awe over me, that I was not so much master of myself as to pursue any further converse with her. Wherefore, asking pardon for my boldness in having intruded into her private walks, I withdrew, not without some disorder of mind.

"We stayed dinner, which was very handsome, and lacked nothing to recommend it, but the want of mirth and pleasant discourse . . . the weightiness that was upon their spirits and countenances keeping down the lightness that would have been up in us. We stayed, notwithstanding, till the rest of the company had taken leave of them and then we, also doing the same, returned, not greatly satisfied with our journey, nor knowing what in particular to find fault with."

This visit roused the interest of Walter Ellwood in Quakerism, and he arranged to go again, taking his son and his two daughters with him, on purpose to make more careful enquiry into his friends' new principles. This time they stayed some days and attended a meeting at which Edward Burrough, Thomas Curtis and James Nayler were present. Afterwards, in the family, another meeting was held, followed by a discussion between Walter Ellwood and the Friends on "the universal free grace of God to all mankind." Ellwood tried to defend the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, but his son tells us that he "was not able to maintain the argument," whilst the clear reasoning of Burrough and Nayler proved so convincing to young Thomas that he determined to see more of Friends, and in spite of sharp opposition from his father, it was not long before he openly declared himself a Quaker.

The Barclays were descended from an old Scottish family who, in the seventeenth century, were obliged, owing to political troubles, to sell the estates which they had held for more than five hundred years. After this David, the then Laird, who was quite a young man, and a zealous reformer, joined the Army of

the Protestant Union under Gustavus Adolphus as a volunteer and was soon promoted for his bravery.

When the Civil War broke out in England, David Barclay returned home and served with great distinction in the Covenanting Army. He married Catherine Gordon, whose family was related to the Stuart Kings, and, after the war, he retired from military life, bought an estate at Ury, near Aberdeen, gave his attention to politics and was soon returned to Parliament. He sent his eldest son, Robert, to complete his education in Paris at the famous Scots Theological College, an old Roman Catholic Foundation, where he was under the care of his uncle, Robert Barclay, who was its Rector. Young Robert was a brilliant student and pleased his uncle so well that he wanted to adopt him and make him his heir. But his mother's dying request to her husband was that Robert should return from Paris and both husband and son felt it a sacred duty to carry out her wishes.

After his wife's death in 1663, David Barclay retired from public affairs, feeling that it was high time for him to be thinking about and preparing for the life to come. He found it, however, difficult to decide what body of Christians to join, and determined to study the New Testament for himself, for he was weary of the endless controversies of the theologians, and persecution seemed to him a poor argument for the soundness of religious faith. His studies brought him to a conviction that the marks of a true Christian are humility and loving-kindness, self-denial and patient endurance of suffering for Christ's sake. Hearing of the persecutions cheerfully borne by the Quakers, he felt that if even what their enemies said of them was true they must be a very remarkable people, and after attending some of their meetings and carefully considering all that he saw and heard he came to the conclusion that "if Jesus Christ hath followers, disciples or a visible church upon earth, these must be they."

The fact of having joined Friends himself did not, however, make him wish to influence his three sons. He preferred that they should hear and think for themselves and make their own decisions. Robert was, therefore, sent to visit his mother's relatives, some of whom were Roman Catholics, some Episcopalians and others Presbyterians; but it was not long before he, too, felt that he must join the despised Quakers. In his *Apology* he describes his experience thus: "When I came into the silent

assemblies of God's people, I felt a secret power amongst them which touched my heart, and, as I gave way unto it, I found the evil weakening in me and the good raised up, and so I became thus knit and united unto them, hungering more and more after the increase of this power and life." This was about the year 1666.

In 1667 his father sent him to live at his house at Ury with another young Quaker, David Falconer, whom he had appointed his "factor," and they at once began to hold a meeting. This soon aroused opposition and there were sermons and papers against the Quakers, which stirred Barclay to write his first pamphlet, *Truth clear'd of Calumnies.* It is a powerful reply to a tract entitled *A Dialogue betwixt a Quaker and a stable Christian*, and was followed by his *Catechism and Confession of Faith* and other writings.

The Barclays, with Keith, Livingstone and others of the strong group of Friends in Aberdeen, had been thoroughly grounded in Calvinistic doctrine before they joined the Society. Barclay seems never to have freed himself from the current conception of the innate depravity of human nature, whilst at the same time he was convinced in his own experience that the life of Christ in the soul is an inward and universal power for the salvation of men. He felt the necessity for harmonizing his own new experiences with his old beliefs, as well as for defending the Quaker position logically and by arguments which would appeal to theologians on their own ground. He, therefore, made a careful study of the writings of the Fathers and of the history of the Christian Church and embodied the results of his researches and his own experiences in a book entitled *An Apology for the true Christian Divinity, as the same is held forth, and preached, by the people called in scorn, Quakers; being a full Explanation and Vindication of their Principles and Doctrines, by many Arguments, deduced from Scripture and Right Reason, and the testimonies of famous authors, both ancient and modern, with a full answer to the strongest objections usually made against them.* The book was published in Latin in 1676, and in English two years later, and was translated into Low Dutch, French, Spanish, Danish and German. It was presented to the King by the writer, then twenty-seven years of age. It was a wonderful piece of work for so young a man, even if we admit that he received much help from George Keith, who was ten years older and an even riper scholar. It was of great

service to Friends at the time and is still the classic defence and exposition of our Quaker faith. W. C. Braithwaite says of it: "The permanent value of the *Apology* lies not in the imperfect success which attended Barclay's efforts to press the Quaker experience into these [the Calvinistic] moulds of thought, and thus vindicate it to his own age, but in the sureness of emphasis with which, in spite of them, he is continually asserting that religion is an inward spiritual life received from God and transforming human nature."

Both David and Robert Barclay suffered much for their faith in those days of persecution. Besides imprisonments, they had to meet the coldness and scorn of former friends and acquaintances, and the taunts and derision of those who used to look up to and respect them; but when one of his friends was once lamenting to David Barclay that he should have to bear such indignities in his old age, he replied: "I find more satisfaction, as well as honour, in being thus insulted for my religious principles, than when, a few years ago, it was usual for the magistrates, as I passed the City of Aberdeen, to meet me on the road and conduct me to public entertainment in their hall, and then escort me out again to gain my favour." Whittier's fine poem on "Barclay of Ury" well pictures this brave spirit.

The third learned exponent and defender of the Quaker faith, William Penn, joined Friends in 1667 and almost at once began his literary work on behalf of his new faith by producing a pamphlet whose title well illustrates the spirit of enthusiasm in which he wrote. It runs:

Truth Exalted in a short but sure Testimony against all those Religions, Faiths and Worships, that have been formed and followed in the darkness of Apostacy:—and for that glorious Light which is now risen and shines forth, in the Life and Doctrine of the despised Quakers as the alone good old way of Life and Salvation.

Presented to Princes, Priests and People, that they may repent, believe and obey.

"By William Penn, whom Divine Love constrains in an holy contempt to trample on Egypt's glory, not fearing the King's wrath, having beheld the majesty of Him who is invisible."

In 1668 he published *The Sandy Foundation Shaken* which was the cause of his first imprisonment in the Tower, during which he wrote *No Cross, No Crown.*

Penn's writings were more voluminous than those of either Penington or Barclay.

His collected works included fifty-eight original volumes and covered 1,586 closely printed folio pages. J. W. Graham says of them: "The same Quaker gospel is expounded many times over. Each book or pamphlet was written for its occasion; and no body of collected works was ever in the author's mind." Of his best known book, *No Cross, No Crown*, Graham says: "If William Penn had never written anything else his message to the world would have been delivered in this volume. It is one of the notable voices of Christianity, an unflinching presentment of what Christian experience is and demands of those faithful to it. . . . It became for two centuries the standard book of Friends' practice, as Barclay's *Apology* was of their theory, and Fox's *Journal* of their history and origin." [1] By 1857 it had run through twenty-four editions, and a new one is still occasionally called for.

Of his many later works we can only name a few. *Primitive Christianity Revived*, written in 1696, was a treatise on the Indwelling Light of Christ, intended as a popular handbook of Quaker doctrine. It ran through numerous editions and was translated into Welsh and German.

During the years when he was in hiding in London (1691-93), Penn produced several of his best works.

One of them, *Some Fruits of Solitude*, sums up for us in short, pithy sentences his philosophy of life, gathered from his own experience. It was translated into several languages, and has been widely read. Robert Louis Stevenson picked it up by chance on a bookstall in San Francisco in December 1879 and calls it "this sweet, dignified and wholesome book." "I found it," he says, "in all times and places a peaceful and sweet companion." Its opening sentences show the spirit in which Penn met his misfortunes: "The author blesseth God for his retirement; and kisses that gentle hand which led him into it. For, though it should prove barren to the world, it can never do so to him. He has now had some time he could call his own—a property he was never so much master of before—in which he has taken a view of himself and the world; what might have been done, what mended and what avoided in his human conduct, together with the omissions and excesses of others, as well societies

[1] William Penn, pp. 35 and 46.

and governments as private families and persons. And he verily thinks, were he to live over his life again, he could not only with God's grace, serve Him, but his neighbour and himself better than he hath done, and have seven years of his time to spare. And yet perhaps he hath not been the worst or the idlest man in the world, nor is he the oldest."

Another book, his *Essay towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe*, anticipated by nearly two hundred years the ideas of the advocates of the Hague Conferences and of the League of Nations. He refers to the "Great Design" proposed in 1603 by Henri IV of France, to place all the European States under a "General Council of Europe," and he bases his argument on the conviction that the road to peace will be found along the path of *justice* rather than *war*. Just as individuals become members of States and for the sake of security and order submit to the settlement of their differences by law instead of force, so, he argues, should States become members of some larger organization and submit their disputes to a Central Court which should enforce rules agreed to by the consent of all.

It was a seed-thought, which lovers of peace are still working to bring to fruition amidst the wreckage of their hopes and the widespread devastation caused by the Great World War.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE EARLY LIFE OF WILLIAM PENN

"Christ's Cross is Christ's way to Christ's crown. This is the subject of the following discourse, first writ during my confinement in the Tower of London in 1668, now reprinted with great enlargements of matter and testimonies; that thou, reader, mayst be won to Christ and if won already, brought nearer to Him. 'Tis a path God in His everlasting kindness guided my feet into in the flower of my youth, when about two-and-twenty years of age. Then He took me by the hand and led me out of the pleasures, vanities and hopes of the world. I have tasted of Christ's judgments and of His mercies, and of the world's frowns and reproaches; I rejoice in my experience and dedicate it to thy service in Christ."—EXTRACT FROM THE PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION (1682) OF PENN'S *No Cross, No Crown.*

WILLIAM PENN was born in London in 1644. His grandfather, Giles Penn, was a sea captain and Bristol trader. He made many voyages to Sallee and to other towns held by the Barbary pirates in Northern Africa, and was the means of liberating some hundreds of English men and women, kept there as captives. In consequence of this he was made British Consul at Sallee. His son William, the future Admiral, took over his ship and trading business when only seventeen, and at twenty-one received a commission in the Royal Navy. The next year he married Margaret, the widowed daughter of John Jasper, a Rotterdam merchant, but probably Irish by birth. William was their eldest son and they had two other children, Margaret and Richard. During their early married life the Penns lived in a "handsome lodging" near the Tower, then the fashionable quarter for naval men; but whilst the children were still quite young, the family removed to Wanstead in Essex. Here William was sent to the Grammar School at Chigwell, then new and famous, where he was under a strict Puritan schoolmaster. Clarkson in his life of Penn tells us that whilst he was here, at the age of eleven, when alone in his room, "he was suddenly surprised with an inward comfort, and as he thought, an external glory in the room," and during this experience he was

deeply convinced "of the being of a God and that the soul of man was capable of enjoying communion with Him." From this time on he himself tells us that "the knowledge of God from the inward witness hath been dear to me."

Soon afterwards the Penns went for a time to live in the south of Ireland, where the Admiral owned the Macroom estate—town, castle and manor—which had been given him for his services to the Commonwealth. Here in a country life William grew strong and manly, fond of field sports and of all outdoor exercises. He continued his studies under an English tutor, and made good progress. It was here that he first met the Quaker, Thomas Loe of Oxford, who, whilst on a visit to Cork, held a meeting in his father's house, and although William was only twelve at the time, the impression then made never left him.

Oliver Cromwell died in 1658 and there was no one fitted to take his place as head of the English Commonwealth. Admiral Penn cared little for political questions, his one ambition was to get on in the world and to establish a name and position for himself and his children after him. Therefore, although he had served under Cromwell, and had received honours and promotion from him, he had been careful to keep on good terms with the royalist party, and as soon as the news of Richard Cromwell's deposition came to hand, he openly declared for Charles Stuart and set out for Holland to offer his sword to his new sovereign. He succeeded in bringing over the fleet to the cause of the Restoration and was among the first to welcome the King into his own navy. Feeling that his position was now secure, he was more than ever anxious that his son should have an education which would fit him for Court and public life. He, therefore, entered him at the age of sixteen as a gentleman commoner at Christ Church, Oxford.

Here young Penn came under the influence of John Owen, the great Puritan Divine, who had been Dean of the College, but who was ejected at the Restoration. Here also he again met the Oxford Quaker, Thomas Loe, whose visit to his father's house when he was quite a child he had never forgotten. Penn and some of his College friends went to hear Loe at an open air meeting and they also held meetings of their own for exhortation and prayer, "withdrawing from the national way of worship" and thus incurring the anger of the College authorities. They were all fined for their non-conformity, but this only drove them into more

WILLIAM PENN, ÆT. 22

(*From a photograph at Devonshire House, London*)

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open rebellion. An attempt was being made by the High Church party to bring back again into the Church services much of the ceremonial which had been done away with under the Commonwealth, and they agreed together to oppose these innovations. So when an order came from Whitehall that every University student was to wear a surplice, they not only refused to wear them themselves, but waged war against all who had put them on, and in the quadrangles and college gardens, or in the streets of the town, they set upon the wearers and tore the offending garments off their backs. Penn was a ringleader in these disturbances, and as a result was sent down from Christ Church in the autumn of 1661. This disgrace was a terrible blow to the Admiral, and Penn tells us: "Bitter usage I underwent when I returned to my father, whipping, beating, and turning out of doors in 1662." Sir William had some thoughts of sending him to Cambridge, but finally decided that the best way to cure him of his sober thoughts would be to send him abroad to taste the pleasures of life in Paris and other gay continental cities. He started with a party of other young men of good birth who were making the "Grand Tour" of Europe. They stayed some time in Paris, where Penn was presented to Louis XIV, and made the acquaintance of several other persons of distinction in the fashionable circles of Paris and Versailles. Here, too, he proved his skill as a swordsman, and acquired the French manners of dress and speech. His father decided that he should remain abroad to finish his education. From Paris, therefore, he went to Saumur, in Anjou, where he spent about two years at the Huguenot College, studying under Professor Moses Amyraut. This gave him the opportunity of continuing the classical and theological studies which he had begun at Oxford, and he also acquired a special knowledge of the French language and literature and some facility in speaking Dutch, German and Italian. Afterwards he travelled through Switzerland into Italy, where he met Algernon Sidney, who became his lifelong friend.

He returned home not only an accomplished scholar, but with all the graces of a fine gentleman. Pepys, who saw him several times, writes in his diary, August 30, 1664: "I perceive something of learning he hath got, but a great deal, if not too much, of the vanity of the French garb and affected manner of speech and gait." Admiral Penn was delighted. He presented his son at

Court, where he himself was in high favour, and to avoid any risk of a return to serious thoughts, he kept him constantly employed either on his own or the King's business. He also entered him as a student at Lincoln's Inn. A little later war broke out again with the Dutch, and Admiral Penn was given the title of "Great Captain Commander" and accompanied the Duke of York on his flagship. William went with them and when the fleet gained a victory in June 1665 he was sent ashore with personal despatches to the King.

This was the summer of the great plague, when many fell dead in the streets of London every day, stricken in a moment. William had returned to his legal studies and the terrible events around him revived his sense of the "vanity of this world [and] of the irreligiousness of it." Signs of returning seriousness alarmed his father, who sent him off to the Court of the Duke of Ormonde, Viceroy of Ireland, where for a time, Penn confesses, "the glory of the world overtook me and I was even ready to give myself up unto it." He distinguished himself by his bravery in helping the Duke's son to suppress a mutiny at Carrickfergus, and was offered a command, which he was eager to accept, but found to his disappointment that he must decline the honour as his father needed his help. It was when anticipating his military rank that Penn sat for the picture which is so familiar to us, where he is dressed in full armour, and which is the only authentic portrait we possess of this great apostle of peace.

Admiral Penn had lost Macroom Castle at the Restoration, and although a grant of the Shangarry estates had been substituted, the title was disputed, and it required tact and skill to get the matter settled. William succeeded in getting the grant confirmed, the family fortunes seemed secured, the Admiral was promised a peerage, and looked forward confidently to his son succeeding him in his title and estates. But these ambitions were soon to receive a final blow. Through all these years Penn's early religious impressions had remained, and at Cork he once again met Thomas Loe and heard him preach from the words: "There is a faith that overcomes the world and there is a faith that is overcome by the world." This sermon seemed to show him the way to spiritual victory; "he was exceedingly reached by it even to tears," and began to attend Friends' meetings. Until now his father's wishes and all the wealth and honour that the world

offered him had held him back. But his soul thirsted after God and he felt that only in yielding to the message he had heard could his longings be satisfied. He would no longer be disobedient to the heavenly vision, but, cost what it might, would throw in his lot with the despised Quakers.

Soon afterwards, when he was attending a meeting at Cork, a company of soldiers carried the whole congregation before the mayor on a charge of riot. Penn was offered his liberty if he would promise to keep the peace, but he chose to suffer with the rest and they were all sent to prison.

His friends at the vice-regal Court were greatly distressed and wrote at once to tell his father, whereupon the Admiral recalled him to England and spoke his mind plainly. What, he asked, did his son mean by consorting with Quakers, when by birth and education and all courtly accomplishments he was fitted to take a high place as ambassador or King's minister? Penn replied that he believed he was obeying the voice of God, and told his father that he had been convinced on hearing Loe eleven years before, but had not then felt willing to give up the glories of the world. He soon adopted the Quaker forms of speech and dress, and when a few months later he began to preach, his father realized that it was hopeless to win him back, and in great anger forbade him to enter his house, saying: "I will give my estates to someone who pleases me better than does my unruly son."

In spite of the harsh conduct of the Admiral, we find many evidences that his outbursts of anger were only temporary, and to some extent constitutional, for he was a very quick-tempered man, and beneath it all there was a real bond of affection between father and son which was never really sundered, and which united them very closely towards the close of the Admiral's life. William's boyhood and youth were full of promise, and when he, wilfully and obstinately, as it seemed to his father, threw away all the prospects of worldly advancement, which had been secured for him, the disappointment was very hard to bear. We must also remember the difference in relations between father and son in those days and in our own. A caning, or even turning out of doors for undutiful conduct, was not so unusual then as it would be now. William's love and veneration for his father seem to have survived it all, and, as the years went by, his stedfastness and courage won his father's respect and admiration.

We have almost no reliable information about Penn's mother. Pepys describes "Lady Penn" as a thoroughly gay and worldly woman, but we know that she was tender towards her Quaker son, for when his father turned him out of doors she secretly supplied him with money. Her sympathy must have been a real solace to him, for he felt the break with his home very keenly. After a few months his father allowed him to return, but still refused to speak to him or sit at the table with him. He was, however, welcomed to the homes of some of the Friends whom he met at meetings, and found the purity and simplicity of their lives a refreshing contrast to the insincerity and immorality of the worldly circles in which he had previously mixed.

Most valued of all were the visits to Chalfont Grange, the home of the Peningtons, where he found himself in a choice circle of kindred spirits. Young Thomas Ellwood lived near by, dividing his time between his duties as tutor to the Penington children and attendance on his "Master," Milton, who was living at "a pretty box" in the neighbourhood, which Ellwood had secured for him as a refuge from the plague. The blind poet was just completing his great work *Paradise Lost*, and it was Ellwood who suggested to him the writing of the second part by saying, "Thou hast told us much of Paradise Lost, what hast thou to say about Paradise found?"

It was in these happy surroundings that Penn first met his future wife, Gulielma Maria Springett, the daughter of Mary Penington by her first husband. She was good, beautiful and accomplished, and of about his own age and it is not surprising to learn that they were mutually attracted to each other, and that Penn succeeded where many other suitors, highly desirable from a worldly point of view, had failed.

In October 1668, hearing that his old friend, Thomas Loe, was ill, Penn went to see him. Thomas Loe took him by the hand and said: "Dear heart, bear thy cross: stand faithful for God and bear thy testimony in thy day and generation; and God will give thee an eternal crown of glory that none shall ever take from thee. There is not another way. Bear thy cross." This dying message from his spiritual father made a deep impression, and no doubt inspired the book which is the best known of all his many writings: *No Cross, No Crown.*

During these years Penn wrote several pamphlets in defence

of his new faith, and these gave an excuse to his enemies to arrest him and throw him into the Tower. They hoped that a "close" confinement there would break his spirit, but their designs were frustrated for he spent his eight months' leisure in writing *No Cross, No Crown*, and when told that the Bishop of London had declared that he should either recant or die a prisoner, he fearlessly replied: "My prison shall be my grave before I will budge a jot; for I owe my conscience to no mortal man." Meantime the Admiral was ill and surrounded by enemies through whose influence he lost his seat on the Navy Board. The Duke of York, however, was still his friend, and obtained for him his son's release. He was still unwilling to ask William to come home, but arranged that he should go again to Ireland to take charge of his affairs there. Here Penn busied himself also on behalf of the persecuted Friends. He found "those of the city of Cork almost all in prison, and the gaol by that means became a meeting house and a workhouse, for they would not be idle anywhere."

A few months later on receiving a hint that his father would like to see him, Penn at once returned. He found the Admiral broken in health and spirits and very glad to have him at home.

This was in the summer of 1670, just after the passing of the Second Conventicle Act, and Penn had only been at home two months when he was arrested, while attending a meeting in Gracechurch Street, and there followed the imprisonment in Newgate and the famous trial which have already been recorded in a previous chapter. The knowledge that his father's health was failing fast, added not a little to the hardship of this imprisonment; but at last some unknown friend paid the fines, which he would never have paid himself, and he was free to hasten to the bedside of his dying father. All misunderstandings seem to have passed away, and the few remaining days were spent in loving intercourse. Some of the Admiral's last words to his son were: "Son William, I am weary of the world: I would not live my days over again if I could command them with a wish; for the snares of life are greater than the fears of death. This troubles me, that I have offended a gracious God, that has followed me to this day. Oh, have a care of sin: that is the sting both of life and death. . . . Let nothing in this world tempt you to wrong your conscience; . . . so will you keep peace at home, which will be a feast to you in the day of trouble. . . . If you and your

Friends keep to your plain way of preaching, and keep to your plain way of living, you will make an end of the priests to the end of the world. Live all in love ; shun all manner of evil : and I pray God to bless you all ; and He will bless you."

After his father's death Penn edited an account of the trial, which he called, *The People's Ancient and Just Liberties Asserted*, and as a consequence, soon found himself back in Newgate, where he again spent his time in writing some of the numerous controversial pamphlets which earned for him the title : "The sword of the new sect."

This time he was in Newgate six months, and on his release went with George Fox, Robert Barclay and several other Friends to visit Holland and Germany. There were already a great number of Friends and several meetings in these countries and these were now organized into Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, with a Yearly Meeting for the whole continent of Europe at Amsterdam, which was continued for many years. Afterwards the party separated, and Penn was one of those who went to Herwerden on a visit to the Princess Elisabeth, daughter of Ferdinand, Elector Palatine of the Rhine, a pupil of Descartes and a very spiritually minded woman. She was much drawn towards Friends and they seem to have had a wonderful series of meetings during their three days' stay. Penn also visited Friends in several other centres in Germany and preached the Quaker gospel powerfully wherever he went.

He was absent from England about three months and on his return was married to Gulielma Springett on April 4, 1672. In their home at Rickmansworth he now enjoyed a time of such deep and quiet happiness as was rare in his stormy life. Henceforth Guli bore an equal share in all his hopes and troubles, proving herself his "entire and constant friend, of a more than common capacity and greater modesty and humility, yet most equal and undaunted in danger."

Ever since he became a Friend, Penn had on all occasions stood forth boldly as the champion of religious liberty, which he claimed for all—Dissenter and Papist alike—although his plea for the Papists often brought him under suspicion of being a Jesuit in disguise. His friendship with the Duke of York gave him many opportunities of presenting his case to the King and to the statesmen of the day. He seems at first to have been full of

hope that England herself might be induced to adopt a policy of toleration. He wrote and spoke and suffered in the cause. He even threw himself into the uncongenial task of two contested elections in an effort to get at least one honest man—his friend, Algernon Sidney—returned to Parliament. But disappointment followed disappointment, until at last, despairing of his own country, he turned his thoughts definitely to the new lands across the ocean, already being sought by little companies of those who had failed to find spiritual freedom at home; and the idea of a colony, where everyone should be free to worship God according to his conscience, became impressed upon him as his life-aim.

CHAPTER XIX

PENNSYLVANIA—A QUAKER EXPERIMENT IN COLONIZATION

"Plato wrote his *Republic*, Thomas More his *Utopia*, and John Locke his *Fundamental Constitution*, building up in theory ideal commonwealths. The last one was tried in practice and proved a failure. William Penn had the opportunity and the wisdom, a combination which comes to scarcely one man in a millennium, to rear in his study a theory of government on the broadest principles of right and justice, and to set it to work in a vast territory with friendly neighbours and a sympathetic population. These principles, by their inherent vitality, went far beyond the bounds of his commonwealth, and a great nation found in them the best expression of its aspirations and needs, and is living on them to-day."—FROM THE SECTION ON "THE QUAKERS IN PENNSYLVANIA" BY ISAAC SHARPLESS, Bk. V. ch. iv. of *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, p. 471.

THE great emigration of Friends to the American Colonies, which took place at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries, is one of the most significant facts in Quaker history. These pioneers went out, not to escape persecution as such (for the early Friends never shirked personal suffering or loss), but because persecution was a hindrance to freedom of action, and they wanted to live where they could worship God according to their consciences and practise the truths they believed, free from the restrictions which hampered them in England. The history of "The Quakers in the American Colonies," is, therefore, of special interest to us, because it furnishes the best example we possess of the application of Quaker principles on a large scale to public life. Many of those who went were eager to carry their message to other settlers, to the Indians and the negroes, but the chief concern of most was to settle down in homes of their own and prove in the daily experience of life that their faith and their ideals could be worked out in practice.

As early as 1660 George Fox was planning a Quaker colony in America and during his travels there in 1671–3 this thought

was constantly in his mind. On his return he visited the Penns at Rickmansworth and there was ample opportunity for discussing the possibility of founding a Quaker settlement in the New World.

William Penn wrote in 1681 : "I had an opening of joy as to these parts [i.e. the American Colonies], in 1661, at Oxford, twenty years since." This was when he was a student of seventeen, and although that "opening of joy" was certainly clouded over at times, when more worldly ambitions prevailed, yet through all those twenty years, the thought of this possible escape from the narrow-mindedness which made life in England so hard for lovers of freedom, seems to have remained with him.

His visit to Holland in 1671 deepened his interest in the scheme, then shaping itself in his mind, of founding in the New World a State or Colony where all should have perfect liberty to worship God according to their conscience. Holland was at that time the freest country in Europe, and many had taken refuge there from persecution in England. Some of these had already proceeded to America and others hoped to follow. Among the various religious communities which he visited, the adventures and successes of the emigrants were constant themes of discussion. Their letters gave glowing accounts of the beauty and fertility of the country and of their own joyous sense of freedom, in spite of all the difficulties and hardships which had to be overcome, and Penn was deeply impressed.

There was a large Dutch province called New Netherlands which fell as a prize to England in 1664 at the close of the Dutch wars of Charles II, and which was made over by the King to his brother, the Duke of York. The Duke granted the region lying between the Hudson and Delaware estuaries to Lord Berkeley and Sir George Carteret, who were to divide it between them, and it was renamed New Jersey in honour of Sir George who was a Jersey man. In 1674 Lord Berkeley offered his share of this province for sale. It seemed to be the very opportunity Friends had been waiting for, and, although the particulars of the transaction are rather vague, there is little doubt that, as Bowden states, the property was bought for the Society at the suggestion of Fox and Penn—Fenwick and Byllynge in whose names the deeds were drawn, being only intended to act as trustees. The price paid was one thousand pounds !

The first thing to be done was to decide on the division of the province with Sir George Carteret and after some difficulty it was arranged that he should take the eastern and more settled districts, whilst the Friends retained the western lands, still in possession of the Indians. Penn issued a prospectus, and 230 Friends, mostly from Yorkshire and London, at once responded, and sailed in the ship *Kent* in the summer of 1677. Clarkson tells us that as they were about to weigh anchor, the King's barge was seen approaching. It drew alongside, enquired the object of the voyage and whether all the emigrants were Quakers, and hearing that they were, the King gave them his blessing. Other ships soon followed, and within eighteen months there were eight hundred Quakers in the Colony. The first comers settled on the Delaware and built a town which they named Bridlington or Burlington, the Yorkshiremen taking one side of the river and the Londoners the other. They bought a tract of land,[1] extending twenty miles along the banks, from the Indians for the following articles : " 30 match-coats, 20 guns, 30 kettles, and one great one, 30 pair hose, 20 fathom of duffields, 30 petticoats, 30 narrow hoes, 30 bars of lead, 15 small barrels of powder, 70 knives, 30 Indian axes, 70 combs, 60 pair tobacco tongs, 60 scissors, 69 tinshaw looking-glasses, 120 awl-blades, 120 fish-hooks, 2 grasps of red paint, 120 needles, 60 tobacco boxes, 120 pipes, 200 bells, 100 Jew's harps, 6 anchors rum."

Five years later, on the death of Sir G. Carteret, East Jersey was offered for sale, and was bought by Penn and eleven other Friends, who afterwards associated with themselves as joint owners of the two provinces, twelve others, including Robert Barclay and some members of the Scotch nobility. The first three Governors of New Jersey were Quakers, and the combined " Council of Proprietors " retained control until 1702 when they handed the rights of government over to the Crown, retaining, however, their rights as landowners. Quaint ceremonies of proclamation at street corners, when transfer, or sale of the few unclaimed lands takes place, still attest that they are the rightful owners of the soil. Amelia M. Gummere states that

[1] Although Friends had legally acquired their lands from the recognized English proprietors, they always on arrival " bought " them from the original owners—the Indians—and by this just treatment retained their goodwill. It is noteworthy that the Dutch settlers had also done the same.

this organization is the oldest existing proprietary body in America.

Penn had the chief share in drawing up the "Concessions" which made the Charter of New Jersey famous for its spirit of toleration and liberty. He had here an opportunity of putting into practice the theories of good government which he and his friend Algernon Sidney had so often discussed together. Writing to Richard Hartshorne, the most prominent Quaker in the Jerseys, he says of these Concessions: "There we lay a foundation for after ages to understand their liberty as men and Christians, that they may not be brought in bondage, but by their own consent, for we put the power in the people."

The first care of the Friends on their arrival in their new home was to "settle" meetings, and, in the early days, these were held in tents made from the sails of their ships. This determination to make loyalty to their religious convictions their first aim is seen all through the history of Friends in the Colony, and is the secret of their power for good.

By 1682 at least 1,400 Quakers had settled in the province, and when the second Yearly Meeting met at Burlington in September of that year, the welcome news was received that William Penn was about to sail with a large company of Friends to take possession of his new province of Pennsylvania. In 1684 it was agreed that Friends of the two Colonies should form one Yearly Meeting, an arrangement which continues to the present day, and for seventy-five years the annual meetings were held alternately at Philadelphia and Burlington. The romantic story of Elizabeth Haddon of Salem [1] and the debt which the whole Society owes to John Woolman, whose home was at Mount Holly, near Burlington, will always enhance the interest of the history of Quakerism in New Jersey.

The part which Penn took in the settlement of the Jerseys confirmed him in his belief that there was a unique opportunity in the New World for successful experiments in good government and a great service to be rendered to mankind by pioneers of the right sort, and he gladly availed himself in 1681 of a way which seemed open to him to obtain a province of his own, where he could work out his plans unhindered.

Admiral Penn had lent money very liberally to the Government

[1] See *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, pp. 388–389.

for equipping the fleet, when he knew that the King's finances were embarrassed, and had also for several years gone without his salary; and, as no interest had ever been paid on the loan, the debt amounted in 1680 to £16,000. This was a very large sum in those days, and there seemed no possible way of paying it; so that the King was glad when Penn offered to accept payment in land in the New World instead of in money. The definite petition which Penn sent in asks for a grant of "land lying north of Maryland bounded on the east by the Delaware river on the west limited by Maryland and to extend as far north as plantable." The petition was strongly opposed in the Privy Council by those who disliked Penn's well-known views on political reform, but the Duke of York supported him loyally and in the end his request was granted and a tract of country almost as large as England was made over to him. The province of New Jersey with which he was so closely associated formed its eastern boundary, and it stretched inland across the Alleghanies to the banks of the Ohio on the west, and to the shores of Lake Erie on the north. It had only one outlet to the sea but that was the magnificent estuary of the Delaware which formed a natural harbour, large enough to hold the fleet of a nation. The land was covered with dense forests and extensive prairies, the happy hunting grounds of tribes of Indians, who erected their wigwams where fish and game were plentiful but never built permanent homes or stayed long in one place. The country was extremely rich in natural resources, many of them at this time quite unsuspected. Penn writes of the mildness of the climate and the purity of the air; he mentions the profusion of wild flowers and the fine trees—pine, cedar, chestnut, oak, cypress, etc., with which the forests abounded, but he did not know the fertility of the soil nor the mineral wealth which lay concealed beneath it. The winters were severe and for years the greater part of the province had been shunned by settlers as a wilderness country not worth the trouble of enclosing or cultivating. Penn had no thought of profiting financially by his bargain, but valued his new possession as a place where "men of universal spirits" could work out the problems of good government. When he knew that the Charter was actually signed, he felt that the dreams of his life were on their way to realization.

On the 5th of First Month (March), 1681, Penn wrote to

his friend, Robert Turner : "This day my country was confirmed to me under the great seal of England, with large powers and privileges, by the name of Pennsylvania,[1] *a name the King would give it in honour of my father*. . . . My God that has given it me through many difficulties, will, I believe, bless and make it the seed of a nation. I shall have a tender care to the government that it be well laid at first."

To another friend, he says : "For my country, I eyed the Lord in obtaining it ; and more was I drawn inward to look to Him, and to owe it to His hand and power than to any other way. I have so obtained it and desire to keep it, that I may not be unworthy of His Love ; but do that which may answer His kind providence and serve His Truth and people ; that an example may be set up to the nations. There may be room there, though not here, for such an holy experiment."

The Charter itself is in the old English handwriting, on rolls of parchment, with a finely executed portrait of the King on the top of the first sheet, and the borders emblazoned with heraldic devices. It hangs in the State House at Harrisburg, and is carefully preserved as the greatest treasure of the State.

In it the boundaries of the province are very loosely described. Charles's intention was to give Penn "three degrees of latitude south of New York State, but, unfortunately, though the King did not know it, this infringed on the rights of Lord Baltimore in Maryland and involved Penn in many disputes with him over the boundary line between the two provinces. How serious the trouble was may be judged from the fact mentioned by J. W. Graham that Lord Baltimore's largest claim would have included Philadelphia itself, and Penn's largest, Baltimore ! The provisions of the Charter expressly reserved all royal privileges and the right of the mother country to levy taxes and customs, but Penn was declared to be owner of the land and could sell to whom and at what prices he chose and he had full powers to draw up the Constitution and make laws for the new State. As an instance of how little Penn's spirit of toleration was understood in his own day, it is interesting to note that the Bishop of London got a

[1] Penn had suggested "New Wales" ; then (when the Secretary, who was a Welshman, objected), "Sylvania," and although the "Penn" was, as he tells us, "truly" added "as a respect in the King to my father," he tried his best to have it struck out fearing "lest it should be looked upon as a vanity in me."

clause inserted securing toleration for members of the Episcopal Church.

Penn now set himself seriously to the task of drawing up his famous "Frame of Government" for Pennsylvania. Algernon Sidney came down to Worminghurst to help him, and the two friends brought to bear upon the work the fruit of many years of thought and study. They were both familiar with Plato's *Republic*, More's *Utopia* and Locke's *Fundamental Constitution*. They had both suffered in their own country from the lack of religious and political freedom. They had seen the failure of Locke's system in the Carolinas, and had had practical experience in the experiment which was even then being made in the Jerseys. Both were men of keen intellect and wide human sympathies; both were actuated by the highest motives; and we are not surprised to find that the result of their joint labours proved so well adapted for securing freedom for the people, combined with good government, that it formed the model for later American constitutions and even for the great Federal Constitution of 1776.

Penn's object was to secure an essentially democratic basis for the scheme of government, allowing minor details to be added as events and the public good should render them necessary. In the preface he declares his belief that "governments rather depend upon men than men upon governments. Let men be good, and the government cannot be bad. If it be ill they will cure it. But if men be bad, let the government be ever so good, they will endeavour to warp and spoil it to their turn." He concludes this preface by saying: "We have, with reverence to God and good conscience to men, to the best of our skill contrived and composed the frame and laws of this government to the great end of all government, viz. to support power in reverence with the people, and to secure the people from the abuse of power, that they may be free by their just obedience, and the magistrates honourable for their just administration; for liberty without obedience is confusion, and obedience without liberty is slavery . . . where both meet the government is like to endure, which I humbly pray and hope God will please to make the lot of Pennsylvania. Amen. William Penn."

The Constitution began by declaring that the sovereign power resided in the Governor and freemen of the province. There were to be two legislative bodies elected by the people—a Council

and an Assembly. The Council was to consist of seventy-two persons elected by the freemen of the province, one-third to retire each year. The Governor or his deputy presided and had a treble vote, but this was the only legislative privilege which the Governor retained. Penn was resolved, as he explained to a friend: "to leave myself and successors no power of doing mischief, that the will of one man may not hinder the good of a whole country." The Governor and Council prepared all bills and presented them to the Assembly who passed or rejected them. The Council also had charge of the peace and safety of the province; of finance, of building new towns, harbours, roads, etc., of education, and of the encouragement of science and inventions.

The Assembly was to be elected annually by ballot, and was not to exceed two hundred persons. The members were to be paid; suffrage was universal and the whole country was to be divided into sections for electoral purposes. The Assembly, as planned by Penn, was to be a yearly gathering of the people to sanction, if it found them worthy, the measures of the government; but as time went on its functions increased in importance. Forty provisional laws were added to the Constitution to be rejected or accepted as the representatives of the people, when properly selected, should think fit. These laws provided for liberty of conscience, trial by jury, freedom from oaths, the observance of Sunday as a day of rest "for the ease of the creation," that all prisons were to be workshops and reformatory in character, slanderers were to be considered enemies of the public peace, all children of twelve were to be taught some useful trade, and the penalty of death, by which more than two hundred crimes were at that time punishable in England, was to be inflicted only for wilful murder or treason.

Penn had already sent over his cousin, Colonel Markham, with power to take possession of the province in his name, to arrange for the purchase of lands from the Indians, select a site for a town and for the Governor's house, and if possible, to settle the vexed question of the boundary with Lord Baltimore. By September 1682, he was himself ready to sail. He fully intended to make his home in Pennsylvania for the rest of his life, but he left his wife and children in England until he was sure that the new home was safe and comfortable. Before sailing he wrote them a long letter, full of wise and loving counsel, in which he

expresses his wishes for their future as though he might never see them again. His special concern is for his children, and though he encourages his wife to economy, that there may be money available for the "holy experiment," she is to "spare no cost" for their education, "for by such parsimony all is lost that is saved." His boys, Springett and William, are to learn "the useful parts of mathematics, as building houses or ships, measuring, surveying," etc., but especially agriculture. Letty is to be trained in household occupations. "Let my children," he says, "be husbandmen and housewives; it is industrious, healthy, honest, and of good example, like Abraham and the holy ancients, who pleased God, and obtained a good report. This leads to consider the works of God and nature, of things that are good, and diverts the mind from being taken up with the vain arts and inventions of a luxurious world."

A voyage across the Atlantic was a perilous undertaking in those days and required much careful preparation. About one hundred Friends, mostly from Sussex, were sailing with William Penn, and, as they might be at sea from six to fourteen weeks, they carried a plentiful supply of provisions, including turkeys, fowls, ducks, hams, oranges, eggs, ale and wine as well as the Governor's horses and the carved doors and window frames and many other things for the houses which he and others intended to build. The vessel was the *Welcome* of three hundred tons burden, and they set sail on the 1st of September and landed at New Castle, Delaware, on October 27th. Unfortunately small-pox broke out on board and before they were half-way across nearly every man, woman and child was ill. In the crowded cabins it was impossible to prevent the contagion from spreading and Dixon says that "during two or three weeks some one died every day." and that "of the hundred passengers on board, more than thirty fell victims." Penn was unremitting in his care of the sufferers, going from cabin to cabin to administer medicines and to comfort the sick and dying and we are told also that they held "many good meetings" on board.

After nine weeks of such an experience we can imagine with what joy the survivors welcomed the sight of land.

The Duke of York had generously added his settlements on the western bank of the Delaware to the original grant of land made to William Penn, thus securing him from the danger of unfriendly neighbours who might have blocked his outlet to the

THE TREATY ELM

It was under this elm that Penn made his celebrated Treaty with the Indians

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sea, and Penn stopped a few days on his arrival at New Castle to go through the legal formalities of taking possession from the agents of the Duke. His arrival was made a general holiday in the town, all the settlers—mostly Dutchmen and Swedes, as well as many of the Indians, coming to greet their new Governor.

The vessel then proceeded up the Delaware to Upland (which Penn renamed Chester) and thence he travelled in an "open barge" till he reached the site chosen for Philadelphia. Here, too, were Swedes and Dutch to welcome him, as well as many Indians, eager to see the great "Onas" of whom they had heard so much.

As soon as possible Penn summoned his first General Assembly. The members had already been elected by popular vote and they met at Chester in the Friends' Meeting House, which was the largest building available. Penn submitted to them the "Frame of Government" and provisional laws which he had prepared, and in three days they discussed and passed the whole without substantial alteration, adding twenty-one new laws. "Truly," as Dixon says, "there was little talk and much work in this first Pennsylvanian Parliament!"

Even before Penn's arrival, several ship-loads of immigrants had come to the province. In 1682 as many as twenty-three vessels sailed up the Delaware, bringing about two thousand passengers. Many came from Yorkshire and the Midlands, some from London and Bristol, and Mid-Wales sent such a large contingent that the birth of Pennsylvania was practically the death knell of Quakerism in the Principality. These Welsh Friends were so numerous that Penn assigned them a "Barony" of 40,000 acres, which is now a beautiful suburb of Philadelphia, where the Welsh names, Bryn Mawr, Haverford, Merion, etc., still commemorate their settlements, whilst their original homes in Wales can only be traced with difficulty by an occasional deserted burial ground, or some old building about which there lingers a tradition that the "Quakri" once lived or worshipped there.

Besides the English settlers, large numbers came from Holland and Germany; not only Quakers, but Mennonites and other persecuted sects, who had met or heard of Penn during his travels and felt that they could trust him. The Germans sent Franz Daniel Pastorius (Whittier's *Pennsylvania Pilgrim*) to London

" to purchase for them 15,000 acres of land, lying in one tract on a navigable river, and three hundred acres within the liberties of the city to be founded by the Governor." The land allotted to them has ever since been called Germantown.

One other group of colonists should be mentioned, the " Free Society of Traders in Pennsylvania," a company formed at Bristol, who bought 20,000 acres of land and to whom Penn offered every possible facility, as their ideas of Free Trade were what he wished to see carried out in the Colony, and he was anxious to encourage useful manufactures such as the making of woollen cloths in which they were experts.

One of the first subjects which occupied Penn's mind was the laying out of his new city, whose name Philadelphia (the City of Brotherly Love) he had already chosen. Markham had selected a site at the mouth of the Delaware, where it is joined by the Schuylkill, and Penn approved his choice and proceeded to draw out his plans with the assistance of his surveyor, Thomas Holme. In this, as in other things, he planned for the future and on a large scale. The city, with its houses, squares and gardens, was to cover twelve square miles. It was to be divided into four sections by two great public thoroughfares, Broad Street and High Street, each 100 feet wide and adorned with lines of trees and gardens surrounding the dwelling-houses. In the centre of the city ten acres was reserved for a large public square, and, similarly eight acres in the middle of each section " for the comfort and recreation of posterity." Eight streets, each fifty feet wide, were to be laid out parallel to Broad Street, and twenty of the same width parallel to the rivers. He encouraged the building of detached houses with rustic porches and trailing plants, for he wished Philadelphia to be " a greene country town, which might never be burnt and might always be wholesome." There were to be open promenades on the banks of the rivers and the streets running east and west were named after the forest trees.

Philadelphians of to-day are justly proud of their beautiful suburban park with its spaciousness and its fine river and woodland scenery, but Philadelphia itself is as devoid of beauty as any other modern centre of business life, and in the heart of the city, just where the ten acres of land were to be reserved " for the comfort of posterity," a huge statue of William Penn looks down from the top of the City Hall on the crowded thoroughfares and

gardenless houses with which the tide of human life has swept away his vision of "a greene country town."

The great freedom, both religious and political, in Pennsylvania, the moderate price at which land could be bought (fourpence per acre, with an annual quit-rent of one shilling for every hundred acres), and the glowing accounts of the climate, soil, etc., which the first settlers wrote home, brought a great influx of colonists. Within a year of his arrival (i.e. in August 1683), Penn wrote to the Free Society of Traders; that eighty houses and cottages were ready; that the merchants and craftsmen were busily engaged in their respective callings; that more than three hundred farms had been laid out and partly cleared; that ships were continually arriving with goods and passengers, and that plentiful crops had already been obtained from the soil. When he returned to England in 1684 he could say that the city numbered 357 houses, "divers of them large and well-built, with cellars," and at least fifty townships had been settled. One year later the houses had increased to six hundred, and the province had a population of about nine thousand, not counting the Indians.

In other ways too the Colony made rapid progress. Before the trees had been cleared from the ground, Penn began to build schools and to set up a printing press. In December 1683 Enoch Flower opened a school in a hut built of pine and cedar planks, his terms being, "to learn to read, four shillings a quarter; to write, six shillings; boarding scholars, to wit—diet, lodgings, washing and schooling, ten pounds the whole year." Six years later a public school or college was founded, with George Keith as its first master, and the office of teacher was held in such honour that besides being provided with a house for his family, he was given a guarantee that his salary should never fall below £120 a year, a munificent sum in that primitive community.

Pennsylvania was far ahead of the other colonies in these respects. In Massachusetts no book or paper was printed until eighteen years after its settlement, in New York until seventy-three years, whilst in Virginia and Maryland the printing press was discouraged as dangerous to religion!

It seemed in every way as if Penn's aspirations for his Colony were being fulfilled and he was full of thankfulness and pardonable pride. His principles of good government and of liberty of conscience were working successfully, and so was also that other

project, dear to his heart, of proving to the world that those who have a real belief in the brotherhood of men and act towards their neighbours in a spirit of friendship and justice are much safer than if they were protected by fleets and armies. Other colonies had almost universally disregarded the rights of the Indians. They had turned them out of their lands, oppressed them in every way and relied on the force of arms to keep them in subjection. William Penn's ideas were utterly different. He laid it down as an integral part of the policy of Pennsylvania that no injustice should be done to the natives of the soil. He made every effort to cultivate personal friendship with them, travelling amongst them, that he might learn their customs and their language. Dixon, on the authority of Mrs. Preston, (a lady who lived to be over a hundred and who remembered Penn), tells us that "he walked with them alone into the forests. He sat with them on the ground to watch the young men dance and perform their exercises. He joined in their feasts, and ate of their roasted acorns and hominy. . . . He [even] rose from his seat, entered the lists with the leapers, and beat them all; at seeing which the younger warriors could hardly control the extravagance of their admiration." He spared no trouble or expense that might be for their advantage. He gave them full rights of citizenship and passed several special laws in their favour, lest designing persons should take advantage of their ignorance.

Soon after his arrival, Penn summoned the Indians to a Council that he might confirm in person the promises made on his behalf by Markham. On the banks of the Delaware, just beyond the newly planned city of Philadelphia, was a fine natural amphitheatre, used from time immemorial as a place of meeting for the native tribes; its name Sakimaxing—corrupted into Shackamaxon—meaning "the place of Kings. Here under a venerable elm, Penn met the representatives of the "six nations" or tribes of Indians who lived on his lands, and here was signed the great Treaty which has become famous, in the words of Voltaire, as "the only Treaty between these people and the Christians never confirmed by an oath and never broken."

Penn was at this time thirty-eight years of age, not a stout elderly gentleman, as West's picture would lead us to believe, but tall and athletic and becomingly dressed in the costume of the day. Mrs. Preston, describes him as "the handsomest, best-

looking, most lively gentleman" she had ever seen. A wide pale blue sash of silken material, distinguished him from his companions—Colonel Markham, who had already treated with the Indians on Penn's behalf—Pearson, and other of the leading colonists. The Indians assembled in great numbers. Clarkson says: "They were seen in the woods as far as the eye could carry." Fully armed and in their forest costumes of bright paint and gay feathers, they must have been an awe-inspiring sight to the handful of unarmed settlers. But they had already begun to know and to trust one another. Penn received them courteously, and the chiefs then retired to a short distance for consultation, but soon returned, led by Taminent, their chief "Sachem," who, after advancing a few paces, put on his head a chaplet into which was twisted a small horn. This was his symbol of power, and when he put it on the place of assembly became sacred and the persons of all present inviolable.

All now threw down their weapons and seating themselves in a semi-circle on the ground, the older men in front and the younger ones behind, intimated that they were ready to listen.

Dixon says that Penn addressed them in their own language, but in any case the substance of his words has been preserved.

The Great Spirit, he said, who made you and me and all men, knows that I and my children wish to live in peace and friendship with the Indians. It is not our custom to use rifles or trust to the sword. We have come to you unarmed; we meet you on the broad pathway of faith and goodwill and are prepared to trust in your friendship. He then unfolded the parchment containing the Treaty and read over and explained its clauses to them. It recited that from that day the children of Onas and the Indians should be as brothers to each other; that all paths should be free and open; that the doors of the white men should be open to the Indians and the doors of the Indians to the white men, and that they should make each other welcome as friends; that the children of Onas should not believe any false reports of the Indians, nor the Indians of the children of Onas, but should first come and see for themselves as brothers to brothers and should then bury such false reports in a bottomless pit; that if a quarrel arose between a white man and a red man, twelve men, six Indians and six white

men, should meet together and declare justice, and that then the wrong should be buried as in a bottomless pit ; and lastly that both white men and Indians should tell their children and their children's children of this league and chain of friendship, that it should grow stronger and stronger, and be kept bright and clean, without rust or spot, while the waters ran down the creeks and rivers, and while the sun and moon and stars endured.

Each clause of the Treaty was accepted with a simple "yea," and when forty-five years later Governor Gordon rehearsed its terms to the same tribes, he was able to say : "You have been faithful to your leagues with us, your hearts have been clean, and you have preserved the chain from spots of rust, or if there were any, you have been careful to wipe them away." This continued to be true for another thirty years. Afterwards, when the war party in England succeeded in dispossessing the Quaker government of the Colony, Indian wars began ; but even then the homes of the Quakers were always respected, and it can still be said to-day that no drop of Quaker blood has ever been shed by an Indian.

These were the people whom King Charles referred to in the Charter as "barbarous nations" and "savages," empowering Penn (contrary to his own expressed intentions) "to make war upon and pursue the enemies aforesaid, as well by sea as by land, yea, even without the limits of the said province, and (by God's assistance) to vanquish and take them, and being taken, to put them to death."

The result of Penn's treatment of the Indians is an example for all time of the possibilities of the better way of love and justice.

Another matter of interest is the attitude of Penn and the early Pennsylvanian Friends to the subject of slavery.

Slave labour had been introduced into New England and the other older provinces soon after their foundation, and Penn and his colonists seem to have accepted it as an existing institution of the New World. To most people of that period the slave trade appeared a perfectly legitimate traffic and the negroes were regarded as little better than cattle. Friends, however, whilst not at once recognizing the iniquity of the system, insisted from the first that "the blacks" were human beings to be treated with kindness, and that care should be exercised over their morals,

education and religious instruction. The carrying out of these principles soon led them to see that slavery was in itself wrong, and very early on we find a "concern" arising against the practice. Penn himself owned a few slaves, but, like George Fox, he gave frequent advice as to their kind and just treatment, and when he left the country in 1701 he made a will in which he says: "I give my blacks their freedom, as is under my hand already, and to old Sam one hundred acres to be his children's, after he and his wife are dead, for ever."

The first recorded protest ever raised against slavery as such was made by Daniel Pastorius and other Germantown Friends to their Monthly Meeting in Second Month, 1688, and its reception was not encouraging. The story is beautifully told by Whittier in his *Pennsylvania Pilgrim.* They appeal to the saying, "That we should do to all men, like as we would be done unto ourselves," and remind Friends: "How fearful and faint-hearted are many on sea when they see a strange vessel, being afraid it should be a Turk, and they should be taken and sold for slaves into Turkey." Is this, they ask, "better than the Turks do?" "Yea," they argue, "rather is it worse for them which say they are Christians." The address goes on to show what discredit the practice is bringing on the name of "Quaker" in Europe.

When this protest was read the caution of Friends prevented them from taking any definite action against a custom so prevalent and in which so many members of good standing were involved, but it was not without its effect, and from that time onward we find frequent minutes showing an increasingly awakened conscience. John Woolman (1720–1772) and Anthony Benezet (1713–1784) both laboured unceasingly in the cause. As time went on Friends became uneasy at their members being in any way connected with what they came to regard as an "unrighteous traffic" and at last in 1774 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (which included the whole of Pennsylvania and the Jerseys), made the keeping of slaves a matter to be "testified against," and in 1776 directed the Monthly Meetings to disown those who refused to yield.

A few years later, in 1780, the Legislature of Pennyslvania passed a law enacting "that no child born hereafter shall be a slave —that negro and mulatto children shall be servants only till twenty-eight years of age" and "that no negroes or mulattos, other than

infants, shall be bound longer than seven years." Pennsylvania thus set an example which was followed within the next thirty or forty years by the other Northern States.[1]

What the persistence of the Southern States in the policy of oppression and injustice has cost the American nation is written large on the page of history.

[1] Bowden's *History of Friends in America*, vol. ii., pp. 192–195, 213–214, and 216–221.

EARLY PHILADELPHIA, AS SEEN FROM THE JERSEY SHORE

(*From an old engraving*)

. To face p. 289

CHAPTER XX

PENNSYLVANIA (*continued*)

"Life to Penn was an arena for adventurous service. His eagerness of mind and universal spirit made him leap from the seats of the spectators with which so many are content into the thick of action. Rapt in great designs and careless of self, he was often buffeted and baffled, deceived or mistaken, but his courage was never defeated, nor the fineness of his temper marred. . . . We go to others for flawless thought and deeds of massive patience, but for the kindled vision compacted into glowing act, out of which the famous deeds of history are wrought what other Englishman of that age can rank with the hero of our religious freedom, and of the Holy Experiment of Pennsylvania?"—W. C. BRAITHWAITE, *The Second Period of Quakerism*, p. 211.

HAD Penn been able to stay in Pennsylvania all might have gone well, but many matters demanded his presence in England and it was fifteen years before he was able to return. The boundary dispute was still unsettled and as Lord Baltimore was urging his claims in person and had sent an armed force into the Delaware territories with instructions to shoot anyone who tried to expel them, it seemed desirable for Penn to appear also. Moreover Guli's health was causing him much anxiety, and Friends in England were needing his help, for with the deaths of Algernon Sidney and Lord Russell on the scaffold, the cause of liberty seemed lost and there was a fresh outburst of persecution against the Quakers. Penn sailed in August 1684, having spent barely two years in his province. He left Thomas Lloyd behind him as President of the Council and Markham as Secretary.

On his arrival in England he threw himself at once into the task of helping his persecuted friends. After the accession of James II in 1685 his influence at Court was stronger than ever, and it is clear that he regarded his position there as constituting a special call to service on behalf of the oppressed. He was convinced of the King's sincerity and believed that by remaining near him he could not only obtain relief for Friends, but help James to carry through wise measures of toleration. He moved from the

country to Holland House, Kensington, to be nearer the King, and it is said that as many as two hundred visitors would be found waiting when he rose in the morning asking for his help with the King. It was, however, a difficult task. "One day," he writes, "I was received well at court as proprietor and governor of a province of the crown and the next taken up at a meeting."

On James's abdication most of his former courtiers fled, but Penn remained at his post and was still to be found daily at Whitehall, championing the cause of liberty of conscience. His disinterested efforts on behalf of Quakers and Papists alike, together with his well-known friendship for the exiled King, brought him under constant suspicion. He was accused of being a Jesuit, of secret correspondence with James Stuart, and of complicity in a plot to replace him on the throne, and although each time he was acquitted, his life was full of danger. Even Friends misunderstood him and judged him harshly for mixing, as they said, too much in politics. In 1690 supposed evidence was found of his having supplied two ships for an expedition against England, and a warrant for conspiracy was out against him when George Fox died on January 13, 1691. Penn had the sorrowful task of writing the news to Margaret Fox at Swarthmore, and he risked capture in order to be present at the funeral, which was attended by two thousand persons, and where he was the chief speaker. Afterwards he felt it best to remain in hiding in London, for he did "not know what trumped-up charges his enemies might make against him if he gave himself up."

This last injustice must have been particularly irksome to his spirit. He could face and disprove an open accusation, but this was the work of a base informer, who had earned his own freedom by traducing Penn, and who would stoop to any knavery to keep him out of the way. Penn was longing to be back in Pennsylvania, where things were going grievously wrong owing to his prolonged absence, but instead he was obliged to remain in England for four years, "hunted up and down," as he wrote, "and could never be allowed to live quietly in city or country." And now another trouble came. William III was the leader of the forces in Europe which were opposed to French domination, and it seemed inevitable that England must soon be at war with France. The colonies were, therefore, being urged to raise men and prepare for defence against their French neighbours, and all responded eagerly except

Pennsylvania. There the Quakers remained aloof and calm. They said that they had no quarrel with the French and would not fight against them. So, in October 1692, the heaviest blow which fortune had yet dealt him fell on Penn—his Colony on which he had spent his life and his substance was withdrawn from his control and placed in the hands of Colonel Fletcher, Governor of New York.

To all outward seeming Penn was now a broken man. Himself in hiding under false accusations of conspiracy and treason, his financial affairs critically embarrassed, his wife's health failing and his "holy experiment" imperilled. But no man ever rose more nobly above such an accumulated burden of misfortunes. His friend Isaac Norris wrote of him: "The more he is pressed the more he rises. He seems of a spirit to bear and rub through difficulties and as thou observes, his foundation remains."

At last in November 1693, strong appeals against the injustice of Penn's detention were made to the King; he was openly cleared from suspicion, and was free to go home to his wife and children. In August 1694, he obtained a re-grant of Pennsylvania, though with certain conditions attached as to supplying means for its defence. But the burden of the false accusations brought against her husband, the long separation, the distrust and misunderstanding of his friends, and his financial embarrassment had all weighed on Guli's spirits. She had never been strong, this added strain proved too heavy, and she died on February 23, 1694, only about ten weeks after Penn's acquittal. Their eldest son, Springett, a lad of eighteen, with "the seeds of many good qualities rising in him," was already sickening with consumption, and after a lingering illness, during which his father nursed him most tenderly, he, too, died in 1696. This was another heavy sorrow. There had been promise for the future welfare of Pennsylvania in the virtues and graces of Springett's character; but the only other son, William, was of a different type. He was an adventurous and high-spirited boy, courageous and honourable, but one for whom religion had no interest and the pleasures of the world great attractions. His dissolute habits and his debts were an added sorrow to his father's later years.

Shortly before Springett's death, Penn married again, his second wife being Hannah Callowhill of Bristol, who is spoken of as an

energetic and capable woman, much liked in Pennsylvania, and who developed good business capacity as the need arose. They had a family of six children, four sons and two daughters, one of whom died in infancy. Hannah Penn and Letty preferred living quietly in England to the uncertainties of life in a new country, and on their account Penn removed from Worminghurst to Bristol and postponed his return to Pennsylvania for some years. It was during these years that he made the acquaintance of Peter the Great, who was then living at Deptford, and whose intercourse with Friends led to his frequent attendance at Deptford Meeting. Penn also visited Friends in Ireland and his tenants at Shangarry, and was constantly engaged in religious debates or in answering controversial pamphlets.

Meanwhile things had not been going very well in Pennsylvania. Thomas Lloyd of Dolobran Hall, Montgomeryshire, was the leader of the band of Welsh Friends who had emigrated to Pennsylvania, and had been among the first to settle there with his wife and family. Whilst he was Deputy Governor all went smoothly, but it was no easy post and he grew tired of the responsibility of office, although he continued to be looked up to as a leader by Friends in all matters of Church and State until his death in 1694 at the age of forty-five. Penn appointed John Blackwell, an old Cromwellian soldier to succeed Lloyd, but he proved a failure, and, except for the two years from 1699 to 1701, when Penn was himself again in residence, there seems to have been constant friction about the administration of the government for the next twenty years.

One cause of continual difficulty was that under the Charter Pennsylvania was liable for war taxes and other military demands, which no Quaker Governor could conscientiously grant, whilst on the other hand, a Governor who was not a Friend seldom worked harmoniously with the Quaker Assembly and population. Moreover Penn was a poor judge of character. He had unbounded faith in human nature, and expected every one to be as honourable as he was himself, and many of those whom he placed in responsible positions proved unworthy of his trust.

It must also be admitted that, speaking generally, Pennsylvania Friends did not acquit themselves worthily of the splendid inheritance upon which they had entered. Between them and the Indians the mutual trust which Penn's just and generous

treatment had inaugurated seems to have continued and all was peace and friendliness. But in other matters there was a great deal of unrest. Graham reminds us that none but men of "unusual grit" would have faced the imprisonment and opposition which the Quakers had had to bear in England, and thinks that it should not surprise us that when they were suddenly transplanted, away from all the restrictions of their old life, to a land of perfect freedom, their high sense of conscientiousness on the one hand and their native stubbornness on the other, should have produced factions and discords. In England they had been strictly excluded from all share in the government and had spent their lives in opposing its unjust laws; in Pennsylvania the power was in their own hands and they failed to realize that even a democratic government cannot work unless loyally supported by the people, and that those who are placed in charge of its affairs must work harmoniously together with due consideration for one another's feelings and opinions.

The troubles were augmented by the Keith controversy which disturbed the Quaker fellowship both in England and America during these years. George Keith was from Aberdeen, a learned University man and a prominent leader amongst Friends. He had travelled with William Penn and Robert Barclay in Germany, and had written and suffered in defence of the Quaker faith. When he first came to America he was Surveyor-General of New Jersey. Later he was chosen as first Headmaster of the Friends' Public School in Philadelphia, and afterwards he spent most of his time travelling through the colonies preaching a severe type of Quakerism. He laid great stress on plainness of dress and proposed strict rules of discipline and a Confession of Faith which would ensure uniformity on numerous points of doctrine. Liberty to speak or to offer prayer in a meeting was to be limited to those who had given some proof of their experience and ability. He accused Friends of preaching that the light of Christ in the heart was alone sufficient for salvation, and of neglecting to teach that Christ came in the flesh and died on the cross for the sins of the world. All writers of the time agree that it was Keith's *spirit* much more than his teaching that caused the separation. John Banks calls him "that contentious man . . . of a very turbulent and troublesome spirit, vexatious to the Church of Christ" and even the courteous Thomas Story speaks of him as "that contentious apostate from the Truth of God." Henry Gouldney writes:

"He is not a man governed with that meekness that becomes his doctrine, who puts a great value on the outward coming of our blessed Lord, which I hope all honest Friends finds it their duty to do; yet himself far from making him a lively example in meekness and humility. . . . His doctrines in the general are I think owned by all sound Friends; but he seems to lay down about seven points which he calls fundamentals, in any of whom, if we disagree in, he cannot hold fellowship; though, upon the whole, was not his spirit wrong, that would easily be accommodated."

In 1695 he was disowned by London Yearly Meeting as having "gone from the blessed unity of the peaceable spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ" but he became more and more bitter against Friends all through his life towards the close of which he joined the Church of England, was made a Minister and did active propaganda work on its behalf.

In the autumn of 1699 Penn was at last able to return to Pennsylvania. He brought with him his new wife with their five young children and his older daughter Letty, as well as a young Scotch Friend, James Logan, who was to act as his Secretary and who proved an invaluable helper and a faithful friend to the end of his life. Logan was a man of good education and wide culture and his home at Stenton near Philadelphia became a centre of intellectual life.

Penn's welcome on his arrival is thus described in a letter from Logan to young Penn: "The highest terms I could use would hardly give you an idea of the expectation and welcome which thy father received from the most of the honester party here; Friends generally concluded that after all their troubles and disappointments, this province now scarce wanted anything more to render it completely happy. . . . Friends' love to the Governor was great and sincere; they had long mourned for his absence and passionately desired his return. He, they firmly believed, would compose all their difficulties and repair all that was amiss."

The family settled down at Pennsbury Manor, the house begun on Penn's first visit and now completed, on the site thirty miles from Philadelphia which he had chosen. The estate consisted of about six thousand acres of forest land, of which some ten acres had been cleared for buildings, gardens and fields, and it was encircled by the Delaware and its tributary streams.

The house stood on high ground overlooking the river. It was built of brick, two stories high and was large and commodious. The spacious hall was used on public occasions for entertainments and here Penn often received his Indian friends. The rooms were wainscotted with English oak and the furniture and fittings had all been brought from England. Cushions and curtains, a complete set of Tonbridge ware and a great quantity of damask table cloths and fine napkins are among the items in the inventory which has been preserved. But the gardens were the Governor's chief care and delight, and he spared neither money nor trouble in laying them out and filling them with the choicest plants and flowers. They were the wonder of the Colony for their extent and beauty.

The daily life at Pennsbury was planned on a generous and hospitable scale and there seems to have been little either in the dress or recreations of the family of that severe simplicity which we associate with early Friends. There was a large coach for travelling, a fine yacht for the Governor's visits to other settlements on the river and several thoroughbred horses for him to ride.

Isaac Sharpless, writing of this second visit of Penn's to Pennsylvania says: "The contrast between the high hopes in his first visit and the mean and mercenary troubles of the second would have broken the enthusiasm of an ordinary man. Yet it does not seem to have done so with him. . . . 'Friends,' Penn said to the Legislature, 'if there is anything in the Charter that jars, alter it . . . I desire to see mine, no other than in the people's prosperity.'

"And the people's prosperity was justifying him. The political troubles were on the surface. Friends and others were flocking in. They were building their houses and clearing the lands. They were establishing Meetings and were coming together semi-weekly in the fear of God. To an outside observer who could fairly judge, the solidity of the State was established under Penn's benign institutions, and the quarrels which make up history were only the froth. Two busy years of Penn's forceful personality cleared away many difficulties. He gave the province, the city, and the school new charters. He bought additional land of the Indians, and cemented their bonds with the whites. He preached in the Meetings and straightened out the

Church affairs; and he went through an immense amount of detail, as to property lines, local offices, and public bridges and roads. Could he have remained, much of the subsequent unedifying politics would never have had to be recorded." [1]

In the autumn of 1701 Penn heard that in consequence of the war with France the Crown was about to take over all the private colonies, and unless he was willing to be deprived for a second time of his Governorship it was necessary for him to go at once to England and defend his interests there. Sorrowfully he prepared to leave and sorrowfully the colonists saw him go; but perhaps none with more sincere grief than the Indians, who realized that he was their true friend. They seemed to have a presentiment that they would never see him again and they came from all parts of the country to bid him farewell. The Moravian missionary, Heckewelder, tells us that after he left they used frequently to assemble together "in the woods, in some shady spot, as nearly as possible similar to those where they used to meet their brother [Onas], and there lay all his words and speeches, with those of his descendants, on a blanket or clean piece of bark, and with great satisfaction go successively over the whole. This practice, which I have repeatedly witnessed, continued until the year 1780, when the disturbances which took place put an end to it, probably for ever."

Seventeen years later, when the Indians heard of his death in England, they sent over to his widow a present of skins so that she might have a garment to shield her "whilst passing through the thorny wilderness of this world without her guide."

Five years after the death of Penn the first Indian who had ever been killed in Pennsylvania was murdered by a white man. But such was the influence of Penn's example that the Indians (usually so revengeful) themselves prayed that the murderer's life might be spared. The request was granted, but he died soon after and they then said that the Great Spirit had avenged their brother. As late as 1850 Janney wrote: "Among the scattered remnants of those once powerful tribes . . . the name of the great and good Onas continues to be held in grateful remembrance."

On Penn's return to England troubles again thickened around

[1] *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, p. 482.

him. The story of the knavery of his land agent, Philip Ford, and the extortionate demands of Ford's widow and her son would take too long to tell here. They had managed to get a Deed of Sale of the Province into their hands and, as they refused to arbitrate, the result was that in spite of all the efforts of his friends Penn was in a debtors' prison in the Old Bailey for eleven months. But the injustice of their claims roused general indignation, and during that time their frauds and villany were exposed so clearly that they became alarmed, and agreed to settle with Penn for £6,400, for which sum the Friends who had arranged the matter took a mortgage on the province, and Penn was again free.

This was in December 1708. He was anxious to return to the Colony, but could not do so for want of money, and the colonists, although appealed to, refused to help him.

After Penn had left the province in 1701 divisions had again broken out. A number of the colonists, led by David Lloyd, opposed what they called the aristocratic tendencies of the Governor, and made most ungenerous and unjustifiable attacks upon him, whilst Logan, supported by the better educated and more responsible citizens, defended his actions. This state of affairs lasted until 1710, when the friends of Penn so bestirred themselves that the partisans of Lloyd were defeated at the elections, and the new Assembly was composed of those who were faithful to the Governor. Before this Assembly met, a letter was received from Penn beginning, "My old Friends," in which he made a final and touching appeal to their loyalty, reminding them of all that he had done and suffered that they might enjoy the freedom and the material blessings which were theirs in Pennsylvania. Whilst they had grown rich, he had grown poor, having even been obliged through their avarice and neglect to seek the shelter of a debtors' prison. "Could I," he writes, "know any real oppression you lie under, that it is in my power to remedy . . . I should be as ready on my part, to remove them, as you to desire it"; but he adds that he is with deep sorrow convinced that their complaints arise from ingratitude to God for the blessings they enjoy. This letter was read everywhere and caused a sudden revulsion of feeling in his favour. Sharpless says: "It did not come any too soon.

William Penn had two years of normal life in which to enjoy the loyalty and respect of his people. His troubles with his steward were also over and his American property was beginning to yield a comfortable income. His acceptance among his English Friends of all classes was also much more cordial, and the tongue of calumny was silenced."

He was, however, still unable to return to Pennsylvania, and as his son was unfit to rule, and indeed wished to be relieved from the responsibility, Penn suggested that Friends in England and America should form a Corporation to buy the Charter rights and carry on the government on Quaker lines. But they did not rise to the opportunity, and he therefore entered into negotiations to sell to the Crown, taking great care to safeguard the rights and liberties of the colonists. He was about to sign the deeds when he was prostrated by the illness from which he never recovered. From this time until his death his Pennsylvanian affairs were managed by his wife, Hannah Penn.

Isaac Sharpless writes of these years: "We now enter upon the happy period of friendly control of government. For thirty years following 1710 we have a State, satisfied, at peace, enjoying popular liberty and security for its continuance. It was prosperous too, beyond precedent. . . . The days that Penn had dreamed of had been as nearly realized as one has a right to expect of dreams."

This last illness is variously spoken of as "apoplexy" "paralysis" or "lethargic sickness," but the most beautiful expression is one used by his wife—"his translation." He had bravely borne persecution, misunderstanding, ingratitude and disappointment, and in spite of all had accomplished a work the results of which have been permanent and full of blessing for future ages; and now there came to him at the close of his harassed life, a time of peace and rest. It was as if all care had slipped away and he was a little child again. Business affairs had no meaning for him, but he was "as sensible of the enjoyment of Truth as at any time in all his life." So says Thomas Story, who after visiting him wrote: "I was ready to think this was a sort of sequestration of him from all the concerns of this life, which so much oppressed him . . . that he might have rest and not be oppressed thereby to the end."

His home was now at Ruscombe in Berkshire, and here he

lingered for nearly six years, happy in the companionship of his children and grandchildren, and then fell peacefully asleep on the 30th of July, 1718, in the seventy-fourth year of his age.

He was buried at Jordans, in Buckinghamshire, near to his beloved Guli and Springett, and the place has ever since been one of the spots beloved by Quaker pilgrims who find in the memory of his life fresh inspiration for the problems and service of to-day.

As time went on, and demands were constantly being made for money and materials for England's foreign wars, it became increasingly difficult for Friends to serve in the Legislature. By 1755 the Quakers were only a small minority of the population, and yet such was the confidence felt in them by their fellow colonists that year after year they were chosen as representatives to the popular Assembly, and many felt that they could not rightly evade the duty of public service. Others regarded it as inconsistent to support a Government which imposed war taxes, and when in 1756 the Colony was actually embroiled in a war with the Indians, Friends resigned their places in the Assembly and the Quaker control of the Province was at an end. Members of the Penn family, however, continued to hold important positions in the Government until the Revolution of 1776.

We cannot conclude this chapter better than by a quotation from W. C. Braithwaite in which he sums up the "meaning of colonization to the Quaker movement," and also indicates the contribution which Quakerism has thus made towards the solution of some world problems. He says:

"Quakerism would have been to the world an half-uttered thing, if its highest forms of expression had been found in the Church-organization of Fox or the writings of Barclay. It would have produced cloistered saints and a lofty speculative theory of Christianity; it would not have vindicated itself as a Faith able to re-shape the whole of life. In the New World it addressed itself to this high adventure; and, amid much imperfection of execution, supplied the nations with the inspiring precedent of a Christian State. Results were achieved that still bless mankind. The sons of Onas, as the Indians called Penn's people, have taught the white man the just treatment of native races, and the potency of a national policy of goodwill; under the meek leadership of the New Jersey saint, John Woolman, they laid a sure foundation

for the overthrow of negro slavery and caught a glimpse of the task that confronts the world to-day—the Christian reconstruction of the social order. America has drawn from Pennsylvania the lineaments of her great democracy. The Quaker message would have been almost inarticulate on these larger issues if Philadelphia, the City of Brotherly Love, had not been born." [1]

[1] *Second Period of Quakerism*, pp. 414–415.

CHAPTER XXI

THE PASSING OF THE LEADERS

"For that the leaders took the lead in Israel, For that the people offered themselves willingly, Bless ye the Lord."—JUDGES v. 1 and 2 (*Revised Version*).

THE passing of the Toleration Act has brought us to the opening of a new era in the Quaker movement. So far we have been mainly occupied in recording the work of George Fox and the group who gathered round him as co-workers. These men and women were impressed with the belief that they had discovered a new Truth—a living message—which only needed to be proclaimed for the whole world to accept it. They went forth as heralds of a new "day of the Lord," to call men everywhere to this universal light and salvation. They had no doubt of ultimate victory. If (as their enemies tauntingly called them) they were "Quakers," then they confidently expected that the whole world would become Quakers also.

In the period, to which the passing of the Toleration Act introduces us, we find a different note. Many of the leaders have fallen in the conflict. Those who remain have had bitter experience of the slowness of men's hearts to receive their message, and of the cruel enmity of those who will not hear. They are spent and buffetted by the storm, thankful to find themselves for a time free from persecution, and more anxious to make use of this quiet period for putting the affairs of their own community in order than for making fresh efforts to spread their message. As the years pass on, many are born into the fellowship who grow up with an outward knowledge of the Truth, but who have no personal, inward experience of its power. To all these it seems much more important to guard what they have than to run the risks necessary for a vigorous propaganda. The Society becomes more and more self-centred and loses its sense of a world-wide mission.

These remarks are necessarily very general and imperfect. The two periods overlap at many points and there are fortunately always some who retain the fervour of their first love and are ready to risk everything for their faith. But the *character* of the movement has undergone a change, and, broadly speaking, that change can best be expressed by saying that the early Friends regarded themselves as "Publishers of Truth" to the world, whilst later generations, on through the eighteenth and most of the nineteenth century, regard themselves mainly as a privileged Society, to whom certain precious truths have been entrusted which it is their first duty to guard and keep pure from contamination with the world outside.

In an earlier chapter we quoted Fox's saying that by the spring of 1654 "a matter of seventy ministers did the Lord raise up and send abroad out of the North Countries." These were the valiant "First Publishers of Truth" whose labours we have hitherto been following; and, as almost all of these completed their earthly service before seeing the dawn of that toleration for which they had worked and suffered, it seems fitting to gather together here a few details of their joint achievements, and to give particulars, which we have not yet recorded, of the closing years of some of their lives.

Fox himself outlived almost all his contemporaries, and we will therefore leave the record of his later years till the end of the chapter. Of the others who have been mentioned earlier in this history several died very young, after only a few years' labour. James Parnell ended his short, but wonderfully powerful testimony in the cruel tortures of Colchester jail in 1656, and John Camm, having worn himself out in three years' incessant labour at Bristol, died in 1657. Elizabeth Leavens and "little Elizabeth Fletcher" carried the Quaker message to Oxford in 1654, Elizabeth Fletcher being at this time only seventeen years of age. They went into the colleges and churches preaching repentance and declaring the "day of the Lord." Besse says: "Their labour of love was rejected by the scholars. . . . The students, hating reproof, fell to abusing the innocent women, and drove them by force to the pump in John's College, where they pumped water upon their necks and into their mouths till they were almost dead. After which they tied them arm to arm and inhumanly dragged them up and down the college, and through a pool of water and threw

Elizabeth Fletcher over a gravestone into a grave, whereby she received a contusion on her side from which she never recovered, but died not long after." Camm and Hubberthorne afterwards carried on the work, distributing pamphlets and holding one or two meetings, at which a number of person were convinced. One of these was Thomas Loe, who in after years was the means of bringing William Penn into the Quaker fellowship. Obviously, however, the Universities were not fruitful ground for a crusade against hireling priests and a man-made ministry, and we cannot wonder that there was opposition; though the rudeness and barbarity with which it was carried on were without excuse. Cambridge has an equally disgraceful record. In 1653, Mary Fisher and Elizabeth Williams were stripped and brutally flogged there. In 1654 Parnell and Hubberthorne were imprisoned there for a time, and Ann Blaykling for "disturbing a minister" lay in prison there for several months.

Besse gives the following account of the behaviour of the students in 1658–9 : "'Twas customary with them, when any of this people [i.e. the Quakers] passed the streets to or from their meetings, to throw dirt and stones at them, to tear their clothes and spit in their faces. In their public meetings the scholars insulted them by breaking the windows, throwing great stones, and shooting bullets in, to the hazard of their lives. When William Allen, who was frequently concerned to preach in those meetings, was declaring, they would run through the Meeting House like wild horses, throwing down all before them, halloing, stamping, and making a noise, as if several drums had been beating, to prevent his being heard. While he was speaking they threw stones at him, broke his head in several places, cut his face, and bruised his body. He nevertheless persisted in his known duty, undismayed."

In spite of all this, meetings were regularly held in both cities ; at Oxford in the lane called the Seven Deadly Sins, in an old stone house where lived Richard Bettris, surgeon and Quaker, and at Cambridge in Jesus Lane near Sidney-Sussex College.

In 1660 the Quaker movement lost Thomas Aldam and James Nayler ; moreover in this year two of those who had felt called to carry the message beyond the seas, William Robinson and Marmaduke Stephenson, were hanged on Boston Common, together with that intrepid woman, Mary Dyer of Rhode Island,

and the following year William Leddra's name was added to the roll of Boston martyrs.

Meanwhile, although the English law (except for a few cases brought in under an old statute and never carried into effect),[1] did not include capital punishment in its penalties against the Quakers, yet long imprisonments and gaol fever were doing their no less cruel work. Richard Hubberthorne died in Newgate in 1662, William Ames at Amsterdam, from sickness resulting from his sufferings in Bridewell, and Humphry Smith in Winchester gaol in the same year. Edward Burrough finished his course in Newgate in 1663, John Audland died in 1664, worn out with hard imprisonments and with his incessant labours at Bristol, and Joseph Coale in August of the same year, after lying for six years in Reading gaol. 1665 saw the death of Caton, and 1666 that of Richard Farnsworth. Thomas Loe died in 1668 and Howgill, after five years' confinement in Appleby gaol, in 1669.

These are only a few of the more prominent names, but enough to make us realize that within fifteen years from the time when the eager Publishers of Truth went forth from the "Camp of the Lord" to sound their message through the nation, a very large number had fallen and but few were left to carry on the work. Nor can we wonder when we remember how strenuous had been their lives and how merciless their sufferings! What does fill us with amazement is that in this short time their labours had been crowned with such a large measure of success. A mere handful of men and women, with very little learning or influence or money to help them, strong only in the power of a living faith, they had in these few years carried their message to the most distant parts of England, Scotland and Ireland, and beyond the seas, east and west, to almost every known corner of the earth. Persecution could not quench their zeal, the fear of death did not hinder them, and in the face of all opposition they had increased in numbers from the small beginnings in 1654[2] to from 25,000

[1] Statute 35 Eliz. cap. i. threatened to Margaret Fell in 1664, declared to be still in force by the Conventicle Act of 1664, and Richard Vickris sentenced to death under it in 1683, but afterwards discharged. (See F.P.T. 359–361.)

[2] There was no formal membership until 1737, but 25,000 is the figure arrived at by Herbert G. Wood, after careful examination, and is quoted by W. C. Braithwaite in his *Second Period of Quakerism*, p. 458. An estimate quoted in *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 512, based on the general imprisonment which followed the Fifth Monarchy Rising, gives 30,000 to 40,000 in 1661; and another authority (see note to last reference) gives 60,000.

to 40,000 in 1669. Moreover, as we have seen, their fearless and persevering determination to worship God according to their consciences whatever the results to themselves, was gradually wearing out the malice of their enemies and winning over the judgment of their fellow-countrymen to the cause of religious liberty.

In the twenty years between 1669 and the Toleration Act, there passed away almost all the remaining members of the original "Camp of the Lord." As we glance through the list of names and remember the extent and variety of their service to the common cause and the thrilling interest and adventure of most of their lives, it is difficult to pass any of them by in silence, but our space will not allow us to give details of more than a very few.

Elizabeth Hooton has already been mentioned as Fox's first convert and the first woman preacher among Friends. She was a woman of good position, wife of Oliver Hooton, and the mother of seven children, and was about forty-seven years of age when she first met Fox in 1646. Some time before she had dissociated herself from the Church and joined the Baptists, but finding "that they were not upright hearted to the Lord, but did His work negligently" left them also, and was in an open condition of mind when Fox's message came to her as the Truth which she was seeking. Fox tells us that "her husband being zealous for the priests, much opposed her, in so much that they had like to have parted, but at last it pleased the Lord to open his understanding that he was convinced also and was faithful until death." Their home was near Mansfield, where Fox spent much time during the years 1646–50, and where he had many "openings" and deep spiritual experiences.

Elizabeth Hooton's active ministry began about 1650; and quickly resulted in imprisonment, first at Derby and afterwards at York Castle, where she was kept sixteen months. As soon as she was released, she went forward in her religious service and was soon imprisoned again, this time in Lincoln Castle, for six months in 1654 and again for three months in 1655. In 1657 her husband died, and soon afterwards she felt called to join the heroic band of pioneers who were carrying the Quaker message to the New World in the face of a persecution even more pitiless than they had known in England. She says: "In the year 1661: it was upon me from the Lord and my friend Joan Broksopp [to travel] for God and His

people to those people in the heat of persecution and if God required us to lay down our lives for the testimony of Jesus and in love to their souls . . . but they had made a law of a hundred pounds fine to every ship that carried a Quaker and to carry them back again, so that no ship would carry us from England thither, but we took ship to Virginia, and when we came there many ships denied us, and therefore we knew nothing, but to go by land which was a dangerous voyage, yet God was pleased to order us a way by a Ketch to carry us a part of the way, and so we went the rest by land."

Arrived at Boston, they were almost immediately imprisoned, and afterwards condemned "to be driven out of their jurisdiction by men and horses armed with swords and staves and weapons of war who went along with us near two days journey in the wilderness, and there they left us towards the night amongst the great rivers and many wild beasts that useth to devour and that night we lay in the woods without any victuals, but a few biscuits that we brought with us which we soaked in the water, so did the Lord help and deliver us and one carried another through the waters and we escaped their hands."

They were soon "moved to go to Boston again and cry through the town" and were thereupon shipped back to England. Here Elizabeth Hooton found that her son Samuel had been "taken at a meeting" and "three mares with gears" had been taken from him and feeling that this was an act of injustice, she made numerous petitions to the King, the Lord Chamberlain and others for redress. A little later she went up to London on the same errand and according to her own account "followed the King with this cry, 'I wait for justice of thee O King, for in the country I can have no justice among the magistrates, nor sheriffs, nor bailiffs, for they have taken away my goods contrary to the law'; so did I open the grievances of our Friends all over the nation, the cry of the innocent is great for they have made laws to persecute conscience, and I followed the King wheresoever he went with this cry, 'The cry of the innocent regard.' I followed him twice to the tennis court, and spoke to him when he went up into his coach, after he had been at his sport, and some of them read my letters openly among the rest." Finally, perhaps to be rid of her importunity, King Charles gave her a licence "to purchase land in any of his plantations beyond the seas," and armed with this,

she felt herself once more called to visit New England. She was now about sixty-five years of age and her *Journal* records terrible hardships endured on this journey—four days in prison in the cold of winter—two days and two nights in a very dark dungeon without either bread or water—being whipped "for a wandering vagabond Quaker at three towns, ten stripes at whipping post in Cambridge and ten at Watertown and ten stripes at Dedham at the cart's tail with a three corded whip three knots at end, and a handful of willow rods at Watertown on a cold frosty morning. So," she adds, "they put me on a horse and carried me into the wilderness many miles, where was many wild beasts both bears and wolves and many deep waters where I waded through very deep, but the Lord delivered me." The whole story is a marvellous record of unflinching faithfulness and miraculous preservations. Before leaving New England she was imprisoned for attending, and no doubt preaching at, the funeral of Governor Endicott.

The year 1661 saw her back in England, where she continued active in "her Master's business" until 1671, when she felt called to go once more to America with the party who accompanied George Fox, for, as she writes to his wife, "It hath been much on me to go a great while and to do the best that is required for him." This proved to be her last service for she was taken ill and died in Jamaica, aged about seventy-three.

John Stubbs, another eminent "First Publisher," did useful pioneer work in Holland in 1655, and was one of the three Friends who were "moved to go toward China and Prester John's country" in 1661; but perhaps, the most characteristic episode of his life (if not the most useful), was his joint authorship with George Fox of the curious book called *A Battle-Door for Teachers and Professors to learn Singular and Plural, etc.*, which was published in 1660. W. C. Braithwaite says: "The Horn-book of our ancestors, often called a 'battle-door' from its shape, consisted of a square piece of wood with a handle, the square of wood having on its face a sheet of paper, often protected by a horn plate, on which were printed the rudiments of learning, namely, the alphabet small and large, a simple syllabary, the numerals and the Lord's Prayer. The first line began with a Cross and was styled the Christ-cross row, and with the Lord's Prayer gave a religious character to this primer of dame-school education." The Quaker

"Battle-Door" was in the same way intended as a primer for the scholars and divines of England, to prove to them by a wealth of instances that the plain language had always been the true way of speech. The main part of the book consisted of detailed proof of this from about thirty-five languages, many of which were set out in "battle-door" shaped frames, containing a brief statement on the point in the foreign language with an English translation, and in the handle of the *Battle-Door*, this sentence in the foreign language, "The Light which Christ hath enlightened you withal, believe in, that the anointing within you, you may know to teach you. George Fox."

Stubbs was a great scholar, specially skilful in Oriental languages, and there is no doubt that although the ideas may have been Fox's, the learning in the book was due to Stubbs and also in part to Benjamin Furly of Colchester, both of whose names appear after Fox's on the title page. Fox says that the book made a great stir, and that "some of them was given to the King and his Council, and to the Bishop of Canterbury and London, one apiece, and to the Universities, and many bought them up, and the King said it was the proper language of all nations."

Stubbs died in 1674, and in the following years there passed away Isaac and Mary Penington, Thomas Taylor, William Dewsbury, Miles Halhead, John Burnyeat, David and Robert Barclay, and many other of the early leaders. One incident which followed Robert Barclay's death may well be recorded here. He had died in 1690 of a fever when only forty-one, leaving his widow, Christian Barclay, with seven young children. As he lay dying in great bodily weakness he said: "God is good still . . . my peace flows." Fox wrote tenderly to the desolate widow: "The Lord will be a Husband to thee and a Father to thy children." A few years later Peter Gardner felt a clear call from the Lord to visit Ury. He was an Essex Friend in humble circumstances, and when he told his Monthly Meeting of his concern to visit Scotland, they would have provided him with a horse, but he said: "Nay, my Master has promised to give me hind's feet." John Richardson and another Friend accompanied him, they on horseback, he on foot. The narrative is from the pen of Alexander Jaffray and states: "He kept before them full as fast as they chose to ride, and when they had got about half way he gained ground upon them. John was filled with admiration, for he seemed to

go with more sleight and ease, he thought, than ever he had seen any man before. And riding fast to overtake him and going over a field for a nearer cut, he appeared to be surrounded by glory, and his feet seemed not to touch the ground. When he overtook him John said : 'Thou dost travel very fast.' Peter replied, 'My Master told me before I left home that he would give me hind's feet and He hath performed His promise to me.' " He had a premonition that he was shortly to die of small-pox, and had but little time left to complete his service. He had but two half crowns left, but said : " I have enough ; my Master told me I should not want, and now a bit of bread and some water from a brook, refreshes me as much as a set meal at a table."

He arrived at Ury in January 1695, and held several meetings, having the Barclay family specially on his heart, and it proved to them a time of real visitation from the Lord. Four of the children, an aunt, their tutor, and a gardener all made confession of their faith in a few words either of testimony or prayer. Robert Barclay, the eldest son, was then twenty-two years of age and became a valued minister. The others who are mentioned were Patience, aged nineteen ; Christian, a girl of fourteen ; and David aged twelve.

On his return journey Peter Gardner died, as he had foreseen, of the small-pox at Carlisle, his last words being : " I have sweet peace with Him that is the Redeemer of Israel, and am now waiting for my Pilot to conduct me to my long home."

In previous chapters we have followed George Fox's life and work down to the time of his release from Scarborough Castle in 1666, and have given some account of his efforts at organization and of the opposition he met with during the following years. It remains to sketch in outline the history of the last twenty years of his life, during which, whilst he was still the foremost leader in the Society, yet so many others were now associated with him that the thread of his life-story is only one amongst the many strands which make up Quaker history. Still that history would be incomplete if it did not include some record, however brief, of these last years in the life of the man who, more than any other, controlled and guided the movement from the very beginning until his death in 1691.

In 1669, Fox spent several months in Ireland, visiting Friends and settling the Discipline. Returning from Dublin to Liverpool

they were two nights at sea, and on landing he travelled south to Bristol, having many "precious meetings" on the way. At Bristol he met Margaret Fell, who had been occupied, since her four and a-half years' imprisonment in Lancaster Castle, in visiting Friends in prisons, and their families—a ministry for which her own experience had peculiarly fitted her—and who, having completed that service, was now staying with her daughter, Isabel Yeamans. Fox tells us in his *Journal:* "I had seen from the Lord a considerable time before, that I should take Margaret Fell to be my wife. And when I first mentioned it to her, she felt the answer of Life from God thereunto." He adds that they both felt satisfied that the time had come for accomplishing it. To Fox's mystical mind this marriage seems to have had a special symbolical significance, which he endeavoured to explain in a paper addressed to Friends. This document was, however, "so ill resented, and so much disliked that it was called in again"; Friends very wisely preferring to accept the simple fitness of the arrangement whereby these two, who had for so many years been fellow-labourers and fellow-sufferers in the cause of Truth, should have the best of all rights to comfort and strengthen one another in such future service as might still await them. Fox was very explicit that he "sought not any outward advantage" in the marriage, and insisted on consulting all Margaret Fell's daughters and their husbands and obtaining their approval, before he proceeded to lay the matter before Friends. This was done "both privately and publicly, to their full satisfaction," and "many gave testimony thereunto that it was of God." The marriage took place at the Broadmead Meeting House on the 27th of October, 1669, and the certificate is signed by Margaret Fell's six daughters and three sons-in-law, as well as by many "ancient Friends" of Bristol and from other parts.

The *Journal* immediately continues: "We stayed about a week in Bristol and then went together to Olveston; where taking leave of each other in the Lord, we parted, betaking ourselves to our several services, Margaret returning homewards to the north, and I passing on in the work of the Lord as before." This is characteristic of their whole twenty-one years of married life, during which they only spent in all five or six years together, because they always put their "service for the Lord" before any considerations of comfort or pleasure.

They had planned to meet again in Leicestershire early in 1670, but when George Fox got there, he writes : " Instead of meeting with my wife, I heard that she was haled out of her house and carried to Lancaster prison again by an order gotten from the King and Council to fetch her back to prison upon the old premunire." Two of her daughters, who were in London, at once went to the King, who readily promised a release ; but Colonel Kirkby and other enemies of the Quakers in the North raised difficulties, so that it was two years before the united efforts of all her friends were successful in obtaining her liberty.

When she was at last set free, children, grand-children and friends, rejoicing to welcome her home, were at Swarthmore Hall to greet her, but she did not stay long, as her husband had written, asking her to meet him in London to attend the Yearly Meeting, adding that when that was over he had a prospect of going to the West Indies for Gospel service.

The few intervening weeks were spent in preparations for the journey at Kingston-on-Thames, the home of her daughter, Margaret Rous, whose husband, John Rous, was one of the twelve Friends who were to accompany George Fox. Margaret Fox and some others went with them in the ship as far as Deal, where they finally took leave of each other.

The story of this remarkable voyage, and of Fox's extensive travels in the West Indies and the American Colonies, has been told in a previous chapter. Fox was absent about two years, and on his return in June 1673, his wife came to Bristol to meet him with two of her daughters. They visited London together, and then started for Swarthmore, but again the cup of happiness was dashed from their lips. Fox had a presentiment that he was to be taken prisoner, and it came true at the house of John Halford of Armscott, where he was arrested and sent to Worcester Gaol with his son-in-law, Thomas Lower, and Margaret Fox and her daughter Rachel had to continue their journey alone. From Worcester Gaol Fox wrote to his wife as follows :—

" Dear Heart—

" Thou seemedst to be a little grieved when I was speaking of prisons, and when I was taken. Be content with the will of the Lord God. For when I was at John Rous's, at Kingston, I had a sight of my being taken prisoner ; and when I was at

Bray Doily's in Oxfordshire, as I sat at supper, I saw I was taken, and I saw I had a suffering to undergo. But the Lord's power is over all; blessed be His Holy name for ever!

"G. F."

George Fox had just received a message from his mother, telling of her illness, and was intending to go and see her; but she died whilst he was still a prisoner.

This imprisonment lasted a year and two months, but Fox seems to have enjoyed a good deal of liberty. His jailers trusted him to travel to London and back by himself, or with Thomas Lower as companion, on his promising to appear at Worcester Sessions on a given day, and he was even able to attend the London Yearly Meeting of 1674. "Exceeding glorious the meetings were beyond expression," he writes, "blessed be the Lord." During the latter part of this imprisonment he was very ill, and his wife came to be with him, and after his release they stayed for a time at Kingston, until he was strong enough to return home in June 1675.

This was the first time he had been at Swarthmore since his marriage six years before, and many of the neighbouring county gentry called to pay their respects, amongst them Colonel Kirkby, his former persecutor. George Fox now spent a year and nine months in the quiet enjoyment of home life, renewing his health and occupying his leisure with writing and arranging his papers. As soon as his health permitted, he started out again, visiting meetings all through the Northern Counties, and then, turning southwards, travelled by easy stages through the Midlands, reaching London on the 23rd of May, in good time for the Yearly Meeting of 1677.

It was a great joy to him to be able to take up his itinerating work again, and he wrote from York to his wife, on April 16, 1677.

"Dear Heart—

"In the power of the Lord I am brought to York, having had many meetings in the way. The way was many times very bad and deep with snow, that our horses some were down and we were not able to ride; and sometimes we had great storms and rain; but by the power of the Lord I went through all. . . .

At York yesterday we had a very large meeting exceeding throng . . . Friends are mighty glad, above measure. . . . So I am in my holy element and holy work in the Lord, glory to His name forever, though I cannot ride as in days past, but praised be the Lord forever."

Some months later his wife wrote from Swarthmore :—

"Dear Love—

"Glad I am to hear that the Lord preserves thee in health and capacity to travel in His work and service, for which I praise His Holy name. We hope and expect He will draw thee homewards in His blessed time. Thou art much expected and longed for here, but we must all submit to the Lord's will and time. I received thy kind token by Leonard, which I did not expect; but I know it is thy true love to remember us. I thought to have sent something by Mary Fell to thee, but I considered thou would only buy something with it for me, as thou used to do, which caused me to omit it. I perceive thou hast sent things to the children by Leonard, he hath not yet delivered them; but thy company would be more and better to us than all the world, or than all the earth can afford; but only for the Lord's truth and service [are we willing to give it up], we would not exchange it for all beside. . . . We desire much to hear from thee and what way thou passest. All things are well here with us. Praised and honoured be the Lord.

"From thy endeared and loving wife,
"M. F."

From other letters we learn of George Fox's habit, alluded to above, of spending any money sent him by his wife when he was from home, on a present for her. Thus once when she had sent him money to buy clothes for himself, he writes to tell her that he had bought her "a piece of crimson cloth for a mantle" from Richard Smith, believing she needed that more than he did the coat. Another time from Worcester prison he writes to say that with the money she had given him, he had asked a Friend to buy as much Spanish cloth as would make her a gown, adding, "It cost a great deal of money, but I will save."

George Fox does not seem to have been "drawn homewards"

for some time to come. After the Yearly Meeting, he spent three weeks with William Penn at Worminghurst and soon afterwards set out with him, Robert Barclay, George Keith, and some other Friends, to visit Holland and Germany. This journey was full of interest and adventure and was, to use George Fox's phrase "of great service to Truth."

Towards the end of 1678 he returned to Swarthmore, and "abode" there, "above a year, having service for the Lord amongst Friends there, and being much taken up in writing in answer to books published by adversaries." After this, the last ten years of his life, except another short journey to Holland in 1684, were passed almost entirely in the neighbourhood of London, for he tells us: "Suffering continuing severe upon Friends at London, I found my service lay mostly there; wherefore, I went but little out of town, and not far; being frequent at the most public meetings to encourage Friends, both by word and example, to stand fast in the testimony to which God had called them."

Margaret Fox made many journeys up to London to be with her husband, but she writes thus of these last years of his life: "Though the Lord had provided an outward habitation for him, yet he was not willing to stay at it, because it was so remote and far from London, where his service most lay. And my concern for God and His holy eternal Truth was then in the North, where God had placed and set me, and likewise for the ordering and governing of my children and family; so that we were very willing both of us to live apart for some years upon God's account, and His Truth's service, and to deny ourselves of that comfort which we might have had in being together, for the sake and service of the Lord and His Truth.

"And for my own part, I was willing to take many long journeys; . . . and though I lived two hundred miles from London, yet have I been nine times there."

The last time she saw him was about six months before his death. He had retired to Kingston for rest, and she came to be with him, and stayed to attend with him the Yearly Meeting of 1690. He seems to have felt that his service in London was almost over, and was looking forward to returning to Swarthmore in a few weeks or months and perhaps settling there.

Of this last visit to him Margaret Fox writes: "And of all the times that I was at London, this last time was most comfortable,

that the Lord was pleased to give me strength and ability to travel that great journey, being seventy-six years of age, to see my dear husband, who was better in his health and strength than many times I had seen him before. I look upon that, that the Lord's special hand was in it, that I should go then; for he lived but about half a year after I left him, which makes me admire the wisdom and goodness of God in ordering my journey at that time." His health was increasingly feeble, and he often went for long visits to the country homes of his step-daughters, Margaret Rous and Sarah Meade, who both lived near London.

On First-day, January 11, 1691, he attended Gracechurch Street Meeting, which was large and where "the Lord enabled him to preach the truth fully and effectually, opening many deep and weighty things with great power and clearness. After which having prayed, and the meeting being ended, he went to Henry Goldney's, a Friend's house in White Hart Court, near the Meeting House; and some Friends going with him there, he told them 'he thought he felt the cold strike to his heart, as he came out of the meeting'; 'yet,' he added, 'I am glad I was here; now I am clear, I am fully clear.'" Later in the day he said: "All is well; the Seed of God reigns over all and over death itself. And though I am weak in body, yet the power of God is over all." In this same spirit of triumphant faith in which he had lived, he finished his earthly course on the evening of January 13, 1691.

Three days later his body was laid to rest in the Quaker Burial Ground at Bunhill Fields, six Friends, one from each of the six London Monthly Meetings acting as bearers, and the rest walking behind, three and three in a rank.

His keen interest in the Society up to the last is shown by an address which he gave at the Morning Meeting only eight days before his death; also by stirring letters which he left behind him addressed to his fellow ministers and to "all the children of God." An extract from the letter to his fellow ministers in England gives the burden of his concern in all these. "Do not hide your talent, nor put your light under a bushel, nor cumber yourselves nor entangle yourselves with the affairs of this world. For the natural soldiers are not to cumber themselves with the world; much less the soldiers of Christ. . . . Therefore, stir up the gift of God that is in you, and improve it; and do not sit down,

Demas-like, and embrace this present world, that will have an end ; lest ye become idolaters. But be valiant for God's Truth upon the earth, and spread it abroad in the daylight of Christ . . . and go on in the Spirit, ploughing with it in the purifying hope and threshing, with the power and Spirit of God, the wheat out of the chaff of corruption in the same hope. For he that looks back from the spiritual plough into the world is not fit for the spiritual and everlasting kingdom of God. . . . So my desires are that all may fulfil their ministry, that the Lord Jesus Christ hath committed to them, and then by the blood (or life) and testimony of Jesus you will overcome the enemy that opposes it within and without."

From this we see that the shadow of the earthly spirit which was creeping over Friends was already burdening Fox's mind. We feel now also that his power of estimating things at their true values and his wise common sense would have thrown aside as worthless the petty rules as to discipline and dress which hampered the life of the Society in the coming years. He possessed that sense of the overwhelming importance of spiritual realities, which we call mysticism, and it made him a clear-sighted and enthusiastic leader. Moreover, he was never satisfied with any vision, however exalted, which did not find its expression in holy living for the individual and in righteousness as the guiding principle for the reformation of the world.

One of the strongest proofs of his capacity as a leader is the fact that his death made no disturbance in the life of the Quaker Church. The system of organization which he had laboured to establish, settled the authority in the Church upon a broad basis. Truth was a living experience open to all, and not the monopoly of the few. The government of the Church, therefore, rested, not upon any chosen leader or body of men, but was a privilege and responsibility to be shared by all earnest-hearted Friends.

In the same year as Fox, there passed away Katharine Evans and Thomas Salthouse, and two years later Steven Crisp and Thomas Goodaire, so that almost the only ones remaining of the original band were Margaret Fox and George Whitehead, the latter of whom helped to guide the policy of the Society for another quarter of a century.

Margaret Fox survived her husband twelve years. Most of this time she lived quietly at Swarthmore Hall, where she was

the centre of a large family circle, whose welfare, as well as that of Friends everywhere was very near her heart. Although suffering from failing eyesight and dependent upon others for help with her correspondence, she was active and full of interest in all that concerned the Society to the very end. She, as well as George Fox, foresaw the danger of laying undue stress on outward rules of conduct and wrote a letter of warning to Friends in her old age, in which she says : " Legal ceremonies are far from being gospel freedom. . . . It is a dangerous thing to lead young Friends much into observation of outward things, for that will be easily done, for they can soon get into *an outward garb, to be all alike outwardly,* but this will not make them *true Christians.* It is the spirit that gives life."

Her last illness was short, and her soul was full of rejoicing in the love of God. As she felt the end drawing near, she asked her much loved daughter Rachel to take her in her arms, then saying : " I am in peace," she gently breathed her last. She was in the eighty-eighth year of her age.

PART IV

CONCLUSION: THE QUAKER WAY OF LIFE

"The Society [of Friends] from first to last has affirmed that the spirit of man is the place of all others in which the Spirit of God can shine. . . . And, throughout a chequered history of strength and weakness, it has promoted retirement of heart and waiting upon the Lord as among the surest means for renewing spiritual strength. The result has been to produce a type of character which is probably the chief enrichment of Christianity hitherto made by Quakerism—the man or woman who goes through life endeavouring to decide every question as it arises, not by passion or prejudice, nor mainly by the conclusions of human reason, but chiefly by reference to the light of God that shines in the prepared soul."—W. C. BRAITHWAITE, *Spiritual Guidance in Quaker Experience*, pp. 81–82.

CHAPTER XXII

THE QUAKER WAY OF LIFE

"If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk."—GAL. v. 25.

"Fox realized, as few men have ever realized, that we are placed under the dispensation of the Spirit; that the power *from on high* with which the Risen Christ promised to endue His people was no exceptional or transitory gift, but an Eternal Presence, an unfailing spring of energy, answering to new wants and new labours. He felt that the Spirit which had guided the fathers was waiting still to lead forward their children: that He who spoke through men of old was not withdrawn from the world, like the gods of Epicurus, but ready in all ages *to enter into holy souls and make them friends of God and prophets*."—WESTCOTT, *Social Aspects of Christianity*, pp. 124–125.

THE limits of one volume make it impossible to follow the history of Quakerism in any detail beyond our last chapter, but a few words on "The Quaker Way of Life" seem a fitting summary of what has already been written, as well as a useful reminder that the real test of true Quakerism in all ages is not words but *life*, and that even in the darkest days of our history, when the Society as a whole had lost its vision, its message was still spoken in the lives of many who were willing to make great ventures of faith, because they were strong in the sense of the Divine Presence, radiant with belief in the all-embracing love of God and full of hope in the manifestation of that love in Christ as a redeeming power to save the world.

The phrase, "The Quaker Way of Life," is intended to embody the truth that our Quaker faith is something which cannot be formulated in creeds or written statements, but which can only find its adequate expression in the *lives* of its followers. As John Stephenson Rowntree puts it: "The doctrine of the indwelling Spirit has been to the Friends neither a philosophical idea, nor a pious opinion only, but an eminently practical faith, embracing within its scope the whole of human life. The presence of the Spirit gives the power to translate the Apostle's

advice into practice: 'Whether, therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' Hence little account is made of the popular distinction between things secular and things religious; all work, all times, every employment that is not wrong may be accounted holy." [1]

London Yearly Meeting has very definitely recognized this position in its latest issue of Part I of its *Christian Discipline*. The book is entitled *Christian Life, Faith and Thought in the Society of Friends*, and the compilers say in the Preface: "The title shows the character now given to the book. The attempt has been made throughout to state truth, not by formulating it, but by expressing it through the vital personal and corporate experience of Friends. Life itself, with its variety of outlook and condition, seems to us the way by which God has spoken to men through the prophets, and supremely through Jesus Christ, and by which His living Spirit has spoken and is still speaking to men."

Again, under the section on "Faith and Belief," we find this extract: "We conceive of Christianity not as a collection of 'notions' or doctrines, and a number of traditional observances; but as essentially an experience, and a way of life based on that experience. Christian unity for us consists not in agreement in ideas and practices, but in a common *Christian experience*, apart from which neither doctrines nor practices appear to us to have meaning or value."

The rise of the Society of Friends during the forty years from the first preaching of Fox till his death in 1691 is one of the most astonishing chapters of Church history. The spiritual power of the movement carried it victoriously not only through bitter persecution, but through the more insidious dangers of fanaticism and internal divisions, and at the death of Fox there were in England fifty or sixty thousand Friends, a larger number than the combined strength of the Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Independents and Baptists. In proportion to the population they were even more numerous in America, where they had founded two colonies, and where they included more than half the inhabitants in several other important districts.

So far as we can analyse the secret of their success it arose from the fact that they had a living message. They had found Christ in their own hearts and were rejoicing in the experience that

[1] *The Society of Friends: Its Faith and Practice*, 1919 edn., pp. 33–34.

"to as many as receive Him to them He gives power to become Sons of God" and they went forth strong in the faith that He was able to give not only forgiveness, but deliverance from sin and victory over all the powers of evil, and that this message was for all the world.

The beginning of the eighteenth century saw the high water mark of this tide of spiritual life. When persecution ceased and the Society was left without the inspiration of the enthusiastic leaders of the early movement, a period of reaction set in, and by the year 1750 many of the most earnest Friends felt that the glory of Quakerism had passed away. During the next century there was a marked decline in numbers and in missionary zeal. This does not, however, mean that the soul of Quakerism was entirely dead. There were many still left who were as ready as ever to devote their lives to the service of Truth, but their idea of the purpose of the movement had changed. They no longer regarded Quakerism as a Gospel to be preached to the whole world, but as a collection of precious truths or "Testimonies," which it was their first duty to safeguard and to hand down untarnished to their children and their children's children. The one characteristic common to Friends of the two periods seems to be that both the early enthusiasts and the conservative Friends of the later years were all alike possessed by a belief in the possibility of an indwelling of the Divine life in the souls of men, and it was their earnest desire to show forth this life and power in their daily lives. They all realized that faith must be manifested in life or it is worth nothing.

In the following pages an attempt is made to show by examples that faithfulness to this way of life has been the natural expression of genuine Quakerism in every generation. We must, however, bear in mind that the pictures here given represent our *ideals*, and we have to confess with sorrow and humiliation that very many of us fall far short of their attainment.

We also realize that the way of life here described, which in the early days was followed by very few besides Friends, is now shared with us by spiritually-minded men and women of many other communities. When George Fox and the early Friends proclaimed their gospel of the light of Christ shining in every heart and of His indwelling presence, they were often imprisoned for blasphemy, whereas now these truths are accepted by most

of our fellow Christians, although in practice Friends often interpret them differently from others, especially in their relation to worship and to our corporate life.

We will try to show how this Quaker Way of Life has found expression :—

1. In family and daily life.
2. In the life of the Society.
3. In its contact with the world outside.

1. *In Family and Daily Life.*—The conviction that the spirit of their Risen Saviour is actually present with them to guide and strengthen, creates, in those who know it as a living experience, an inward quietness of soul which no outward happenings can disturb—"the peace of God which passeth all understanding." Those who realize that the Kingdom of God has come in their own hearts feel that their most important business in life, to which everything else must be subordinated, is to help others to come into the same experience and so to hasten the time when God's kingdom shall come and "His will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven." This supreme aim colours their whole life and makes every part of it sacramental. The home of a true Friend must be one of such simplicity and his business engagements of such a nature that he shall not be entangled with the affairs of this life, but that all shall forward the one great purpose. The atmosphere of the home must be one of worship—of daily listening to know the Master's will in the little as well as the larger things of life—of mutual love and trust, because all are united in the one service—of willingness to sacrifice ease and comfort and even loved companionship, should any of these stand in the way of the Divine requirings.

In this spirit Margaret Fox writes of her husband's many absences from home : "We were very willing both of us to live apart for some years upon God's account and His Truth's service, and to deny ourselves of that comfort which we might have had in being together, for the sake of the Lord and His Truth," and similar experiences are a part of the lives of Friends down to the present day.

The Pembertons are mentioned by Dr. Rufus Jones as representative types of eighteenth-century Quaker life. Phineas Pemberton came to Pennsylvania in 1682, the same year as W. Penn. His son Israel was a wealthy merchant of Philadelphia,

an important member of the provincial Assembly and clerk of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Of Israel's three sons, John, born in 1727, was one of the most influential ministers in America, and the two others, Israel and James, were prominent in Pennsylvanian affairs during the critical period before the Revolutionary War, when Friends withdrew from politics. Dr. Rufus Jones says: "The Pemberton home was a nursery of Truth. The atmosphere of it was sweet and fragrant with spiritual religion. The father and mother lived and moved and had their being in the sphere of what Friends called 'the Truth.' There never was any question with them as to which interest in life was paramount. There were large business interests to consider, there were important affairs of the province to direct, but everything had to bend to the call of the Spirit, whose Kingdom was the first concern. Others compromised and adjusted, this family group was accustomed to the practice of surrendering everything else to the clear requirements of inward duty."

The "Recollections" of Benjamin Seebohm (1798–1871), written by his sons, tell us how faithfully and lovingly he performed his duties as husband and father, but they also tell us that his children early learned that his ministry was more than anything else that for which he lived. They would watch him silently pacing up and down the garden paths and feel sure that something was pressing on his mind which had to do with his Master's work. Then they would be taken with their parents "on the back seat of the chaise" to a Monthly or Quarterly Meeting, enjoying the pleasant outing and the new flowers they found and their father's cheerful talk. It was so nice to have him at home again, and they hoped to keep him now, at least for a little while! "But alas!" writes one of them, "after he had given an account of his last journey according to usage, he would ask for the sanction of his Friends to another similar engagement, of which we knew nothing before; for except to our mother, until thus sanctioned, these matters were not ripe to be divulged." These probable lengthy absences from home had been discussed by Benjamin Seebohm with his wife before their marriage, and her faith and courage seem to have been shared by the children, for when the time for the parting came they all bravely bade him a cheerful "farewell."

Great care in the training and education of their children and consideration for the interests of their servants have also

been outstanding characteristics of the Quaker Way of Life, and although in the Middle Ages of Quakerism this often showed itself in a strict discipline about externals which was deadening to spiritual life and tended to rouse the very desires and passions which it was its object to restrain, yet, where the parents were themselves consistent and earnest, such homes produced many strong and noble characters—children, who in their turn endeavoured to "seek *first* the Kingdom of God and His righteousness."

Loveday Hambly was a Cornish widow, convinced during Fox's visit to Cornwall in 1655, and her life, which is sometimes compared with that of Margaret Fell, is an illustration of quiet home influence combined with fervour and boldness in the cause of Truth. She owned a large farmhouse at Tregangeeves near St. Austell and before her convincement was the friend of all the "priests" in the neighbourhood. She was a well-to-do woman and very liberal, but never became a preacher. Her time was mostly occupied with the care of her large family of children and servants. Benjamin Coale writes of her: "It was my lot to be a household servant to her about two years, and might have been to her dying day for aught I know, if I had not been taken a prisoner for the testimony of Truth and kept about eight years in prison, at which she was troubled and disappointed also: for she did manifest much love to me—yea I may say, she was more like a Mother to me than a Mistress. . . . And how tender was she and pitiful to the meanest servant in her family if they were sick or wanted her help and assistance." She was very hospitable, not only to her friends, but to "rich and poor, strangers and enemies." Moreover, she had great success in dispensing "Physick." Meetings were regularly held at her house, and she entertained all who came from a distance and stabled their horses. Thomas Salthouse, the old steward from Swarthmore, took service with her for a time in the intervals of his preaching and imprisonments, and writes of her lavish generosity, telling us that in spite of her many sufferings (and no name occurs more frequently than hers in the chronicle of *Sufferings* in Cornwall) "the Lord so blest her in her basket and store that she never wanted meat, drink nor clothing to accommodate her persecutors and their children if they were either in want of food or raiment."

The following description of the Penn household, from John

W. Graham's *William Penn*, may be taken as typical of the simplicity and singleness of purpose of the best Quaker homes of the day :

" We have few words of Guli Penn's left to us. She was not a writer, perhaps not a preacher. She was a lovely and devoted wife, and found her work at home." (She had had six children of whom three survived, and her health was not strong.) " The hours and habits at Worminghurst were those of people whose life was in religion and service. In summer they rose at five, in winter at seven, in spring and autumn at six : a real daylight-saving arrangement. They had breakfast at nine, dinner at twelve, supper at seven and to bed at ten. They assembled with the servants for worship in the morning ; and at eleven, to make a recess in the work of the forenoon, they met again for reading the Bible and other religious books. At six in the evening they met for evening worship. Truly these people were in earnest. After supper the servants reported on what they had done and received orders for the next day. ' Loud discourse and troublesome noise ' were very properly forbidden. All quarrels were to be made up before bedtime."

So also the following picture of the home of Elizabeth Fry (1780–1845) in the early part of the nineteenth century :

" Would that I could bring before you our mother as she was when we first lived at Plashet. The gentle firmness of her rule ; the sober gracefulness of her carriage ; her exceeding love and tenderness towards her little children, especially during their infancy ; the cheerful invigorating influence she maintained over us ; her care of her domestics, mental and bodily ; her systematic attention to the poor. . . . Happy were we when summoned to accompany her to the village, but happier still if ' Irish Row ' was to be our destination. Whether it was the noise and dirt and broad Irish accent, or the little ragged sunburnt children who crawled before the doors, I know not, but charming it certainly was. . . .

" By degrees, our mother's influence amongst her poor Irish neighbours became apparent. The Roman Catholic priest was won over to many of her plans. Bibles were circulated freely, several learned to read, and without interference with their peculiar faith, they gradually discovered that good conduct and sobriety had their reward."

From another biography, that of Martha Braithwaite (1823–

1895) we take the following extracts which are typical of the prayerful "concern" of most Quaker parents for their children. The book is written by one of her daughters who says: "She was always very fond of little children, and her own had each received as they came the warm welcome of her true mother's heart, and had learned to feel, as soon as they could understand anything, that the mother-love which she lavished so richly upon them was the earthly symbol and embodiment of the divine love, ever seeking to lead their thoughts upwards and heavenwards, and bringing them under the teaching of the Holy Spirit to know God as their Father and the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour. As each little one was in turn placed for the first time in her arms she seemed to hear the heaven-sent message: 'Take this child and nurse it for *Me*,' and faithfully did she discharge her trust. In the early morning she would often take one or two of them with her to join in the season of retirement she always spent in her own room, and as they knelt by her side would in their hearing commit them to the care and keeping of the Heavenly Shepherd; and as long as there were children in the nursery, too young to come down to meals, she regularly read the Bible to them and their nurses before going to the morning reading downstairs. . . . In the matter of dress it was her earnest desire to keep our minds from dwelling on outward adornment, and to teach us that in all these things the followers of Christ must expect and must be willing to differ from the world around them, if they would keep to the simplicity which becomes His Gospel. Some of these lessons were at the time hard for us to learn, but the spirit of loving earnest desire for our best welfare and the prayers so full of faith, in which she laid hold of the promises of God as covenanted to be for her and her children, could not fail to bring a blessing. We all knew, even when we felt most rebellious, that it was no mere caprice or fancy which was guiding her actions, we *knew* that she and our father had consecrated themselves with all that they had and were to the Lord's service; we knew it, not so much because they told us so, as because they *lived* it; we never, even in the privacy of home life, heard them say a single word or saw them do a single action which could lead us to doubt their love to the Lord or their joy in His service, and therefore we believed them when they told us that they had no greater desire or higher ambition for us than that we too might become humble, self-denying followers

of our crucified Redeemer ; and the knowledge that this was their constant earnest prayer for us was an influence on our lives, the force of which cannot be estimated."

An instance which is given in the Life of Dr. Richard H Thomas, of Baltimore, illustrates the quietness of spirit in the midst of disturbing circumstances which is one of the surest proofs of the reality of our Faith. He writes :

"On Friday, April 19, 1861, we were greatly startled by the news Allen brought out from town as he came from school, that Northern troops, marching through the city along Pratt Street, from one station to the other had been attacked by the mob, and had fired upon them, killing several. This was the first blood shed in that terrible war. The excitement was tremendous. The following Sunday I believe no place of worship was open in the city except the Friends' Meeting. The population was in a ferment. Almost as soon as we were in the meeting our carriage was seized by soldiers (?) so-called, who forced its driver to go off with them. During the meeting, messengers came repeatedly to tell one or another that their horse and carriage, left tied to a tree, was being taken away. Most of those who were so warned, left the meeting, but not all. James Carey, our cousin, I remember still how he looked, sat without moving a muscle, though three times someone came to tell him that his carriage was being taken. He had come to that meeting to worship, and whatever befell his carriage, he was going to attend to his higher duties. It was a trying time for him, but to my youthful mind, it seemed to me that he was of the stock of martyrs, and as one of the early Friends. The meeting, which was largely in silence, was, I have since heard, a very solemn one, notwithstanding these disturbances. James Carey, in his silent faithfulness, must I think have done much to settle it, and it is this that has remained in my mind." [1]

We may fittingly conclude this section by two short quotations which are given in the new book of *Christian Life, Faith and Thought* already referred to :—

From the Yearly Meeting Epistle, 1911.

"It remains to speak of the Way of Service, as it concerns the conduct of our ordinary work and business. Nowhere is the practical working of our faith put to a severer test, yet nowhere

[1] *Richard H. Thomas, M.D., Life and Letters*, by his Wife, pp. 28–29.

is there a nobler and more fruitful witness to be borne. Business in its essence is no mere selfish struggle for the necessities and luxuries of life, but 'a vast and complex movement of social service.' . . . We venture to say to our business friends: There must be no faltering in the pursuit of right; if it is clearly a question between obedience to our Lord and the claims of business, these claims must give way. Be faithful to the light you have, and follow your conscience in the spirit of love to our Master. . . .

"Christianity is tested not only in the shop and in the office, but also in the home. In the standard of living adopted by the home-makers, in the portion of income devoted to comforts, recreations and luxuries, in willingness to be content with simplicity, the members of a household, both older and younger, may bear witness that there is a Way of Life that does not depend on the abundance of the things possessed."

From the Yearly Meeting Epistle, 1894.

"Led by the Holy Spirit, we shall be enabled to show to those around us that the Christian faith is no mere theoretical belief, but a living realization of the abiding presence of Christ. In all the details of daily life—not only in the meeting house, but in the schoolroom, the workshop, the office, or the council chamber—wherever in God's providence our duty calls us, we may know the joy of being guided by His counsel and may find a sanctuary in the midst of our busy occupations."

2. *In the Life of the Society.*—The central Truth of the indwelling presence of Christ, on which Quakerism is founded, has, when carried into actual practice, produced in the life of the Society, as in the daily life of its members, certain distinctive traits; for example: the important place given to silence, the warm fellowship and sense of comradeship which exists amongst the membership; the realization that *all* are called to be priests, i.e. that each one for himself must enter into the holy place and in some way or other minister to others of what he himself receives there—and, pervading all the worship and all the meetings for Church affairs, the earnest desire to learn to know, and to act in accordance with, the will of Christ who is the High Priest, Teacher, Leader and Guide of His people.

The waiting for His guidance explains the silence in meetings for worship ; and also the speaking—not by one specially appointed man, but by any who are called by the Spirit to offer words of prayer or praise or exhortation. It explains also, the Quaker form of Church government, which is democratic or rather *theocratic*, all taking their share on an equal footing, but all confessedly under the leadership of Christ Himself—the authority in the Church being not of man but of God, who entrusts it to the faithful, both men and women, who have become partakers of the Gospel and are therefore heirs of its privileges.

As the procedure in business meetings has been described and explained in the chapter on " Beginnings of Quaker Organization," there is no need to enter into further details here, but we may appropriately quote Carl Heath, Swarthmore Lecturer for 1922, on the value of the Quaker method. He says :—

" Quaker method at its best is essentially the Christian way of meeting all problems in corporate life. It is a wonderful amalgam of patience and tolerance, effort to reach each other in affection, earnest desire that the best solution may be reached, entire freedom from coercion, or the desire to coerce in thought or action, elimination of the irritating reactions of majority decisions reached by voting, and so thorough an acceptance of, and confidence in, divine guidance that the most difficult situations and divergences of opinion can be and are bridged, leaving a happy and creative sense of agreement. . . .

" It is not the whole solution of the difficulty of compromise, a difficulty attaching to the present limitations of human nature. Nevertheless, it is a method big with suggestiveness for the religious mind, and pregnant with many possibilities for pacific human development."[1]

3. *In its Contact with the World Outside.*—Friends' testimony for sincerity in every department of life was that which at first attracted most notice from the world outside. They could not take an oath in a Court of Justice, or remove their hats before a magistrate, and this brought them under suspicion of disloyalty and contempt of Court. They felt that to take an oath was to

[1] *Religion and Public Life*, Swarthmore Lecture for 1922, p. 62.

admit two standards of truthfulness, and that uncovering the head was an act of reverence to be rendered only to God. Their persistent protests and their willingness to bear fines and imprisonment rather than yield, at length convinced the authorities of their sincerity, and gained for them, on the passing of the Toleration Act in 1689, the privilege of taking a simple Affirmation.

Friends also objected to saying "you" to a single person, to calling days and months after heathen gods, to all flattering titles and to any frivolity or departure from absolute simplicity in amusements, food and drink, furniture or clothing. All these things, whilst small in themselves, were very noticeable, and tended to emphasize the idea that they were a separate people. As time went on, during the eighteenth century, these forms of speech and dress were exalted into "Testimonies," and, with many trivial rules of conduct, became very burdensome to tender spirits and a real hindrance to the spiritual life of the Society.

Margaret Fox in her old age foresaw the "narrowness and strictness" that were "entering in" amongst Friends and wrote several vigorous letters of warning on the subject. Christ, she says, always testified against the Jews' manner of making and prescribing outward rules; for His testimony is in every heart to work inwardly and make clean the inside. She reminds Friends that Christ bids us "consider the lilies, how they grow in more royalty than Solomon," but contrary to this we are told not to look at colours, nor to "make anything that is of changeable colours, as the hills are, but we must be all in one dress and one colour." "This," she says, "is a silly, poor gospel. It is more fit for us to be covered with God's eternal Spirit and clothed with His eternal Light, which leads us and guides us into righteousness; and to live righteously and justly and holily in this present evil world. This is the clothing that God puts on us, and likes and will bless."

Whilst we rejoice that these outward forms have, in most meetings, entirely passed away, there is as much need as ever that Friends should live out their testimony to the inward truths of which these things were at first the natural expression. It is certainly part of the Quaker heritage, which Friends cannot afford to lose, that their speech should always be sincere, their word absolutely to be relied upon, and their whole life ordered with a simplicity which will leave the greatest possible freedom from

worldly cares and make it easy for them to come into sympathetic touch with their fellow-men.

Another important truth which follows directly from a belief in the light of Christ in every heart, is that of the intrinsic value of man as man and the sacredness of human life. Faithfulness to this conviction caused Friends to see the iniquity of the slave trade earlier than other Christians, it led them to treat negroes and Indians with justice and friendship, it opened their eyes to the social evils around them, it gave women from the first their true place in the community as co-heirs and fellow-workers in the Kingdom of God. It lies at the root of the Quaker testimony against all war.

Friends, both as a Society and as individuals, have, as a rule, been keenly alive to their responsibility for the welfare of those around them, and have taken an active part, often as pioneers, in all efforts for the uplift of humanity, as well as in those for removing abuses and oppression. With a calm assurance that the battle was not theirs but God's, they have gone forth with no carnal weapon, but with the sling of faith, and have hurled the stones of truth at the giants of their day.

John William Graham says : " There seems not to have been a day's delay on the part of George Fox and his friends in applying their doctrine of the indwelling God to the reform of abuses in God's husbandry, God's building. It was in 1648, before he had gathered a single congregation, and when he was only four-and-twenty, that he pressed through many difficulties to an interview with the Justices at Mansfield to speak to them ' not to oppress the servants in their wages,' and he exhorted the servants ' to do their duties and serve honestly,' " and many of his epistles deal with social abuses and urge practical measures for their reform.

Then follows John Bellers (1654–1725), whom W. C. Braithwaite calls " the first of the long line of Quaker philanthropists and the pioneer of modern Christain Socialism." In opposition to the political economists and statisticians of his day he maintains that an increase in the population would be " the greatest improvement of the lands of England that can be—it being the multitude of people that makes land in Europe more valuable than land in America, or in Holland than Ireland, regular people, of all visible creatures, being the life and perfection of treasure, the

strength of nations and glory of princes." He made plans for a Colony where persons of all sorts of useful trades should work together, the capital of the rich being employed in a way useful to the country, but so that the maintenance of the workers should be a first charge on it. In a letter to London Friends he says: "How many distressed souls and helpless orphans lie in our streets as the dry bones in the valley, wanting to be gathered together by other's assistance before they can be united. . . . The children called 'The Black-Guard' [the "City Arabs" of the day] are a considerable part of these dry bones: they are our neighbours, our flesh and blood, our relations, our children, however mean and contemptible they may now appear. They are capable of being saints on earth, and as angels in heaven. How much is owing to birth and education that hath made the difference between them and us? Was it our virtue or their vice that made that difference? . . . Hath not God . . . given us the opportunity to be able to give rather than receive, and put us into a capacity of receiving the blessing of feeding the hungry and clothing the naked?"

The next great name in social reform is that of John Woolman (1720–1772), whose whole life was dedicated to the cause of suffering humanity wherever he found it—the ill-paid labourer, the Indian, the slave. In these and many others, love for humanity was the master-passion of their lives; and what fills us with hope for the future is that this love, springing from fellowship with Christ, has enriched the lives not only of these well-known leaders, but according to their measure and capacity of *every* sincere and whole-hearted Friend from George Fox down to the present time. It is in fact an essential corollary of our central faith.

The same applies to our testimony against war, which has been almost universally shared by Friends of every period and nationality. It is not only a testimony *against war*; but, very definitely, a testimony *for peace*, and although there have been many instances of those who have willingly suffered rather than take up arms, it has, on the whole, been the constructive work of Friends towards peace which has been of most value. They have promoted conferences, held meetings, distributed literature and memorialized Governments with untiring zeal. To take only one instance, it was a Friend, Joseph Sturge, of Birmingham, who suggested the holding of International Peace Congresses. The first was at

Brussels in 1848, and was attended by fifty Friends. At the next, held at Paris in 1849, Victor Hugo presided and prophesied in eloquent words a time when the United States of America and the United States of Europe should join hands across the ocean in a mutual interchange of commerce and genius, "uniting for the good of all those two irresistible and infinite powers, the fraternity of men and the power of God."

At the Congress at Frankfort in 1850, Joseph Sturge brought forward a "concern" that a small group of persons from that Congress should on their own responsibility, approach the Governments of Germany and Denmark, who were about to go to war over the possession of Schleswig-Holstein. Joseph Sturge, Elihu Burritt of America, Frederic Wheeler of England, and Dr. Varrantrap of Germany formed the voluntary delegation. They were favourably received by both governments, and their plan seemed at first likely to succeed, but their efforts were defeated by secret diplomacy.

In 1854, when the shadow of the Crimean War began to darken Europe, Joseph Sturge brought a "concern" before the London Meeting for Sufferings in the hope that a visit of friendly mediation to the Czar of Russia might avert the threatened catastrophe. He and two other Friends were sent on this delicate mission, bearing with them an address from the Society to Czar Nicholas. The journey was a hazardous one, and the weather bitterly cold. The situation was much too complicated to be settled by their well-meant efforts, but the love which prompted them made a deep impression, not only on the Czar and his family, but on the whole Russian nation.

Having done their utmost to avert war, Friends have never shrunk from the further task of trying to repair its devastations, and it may truthfully be said that one part of the "way of life" which is their ideal is a willingness to respond, as far as lies in their power, to every call for help that comes to them, either for the souls or bodies of men.

In 1661 Fox wrote a paper called *The Line of Righteousness and Justice stretched forth over all Merchants*, etc., which begins "All Friends everywhere, live in the seed of God," and which W. C. Braithwaite paraphrases thus: "Do what you do in the wisdom of God, and you will then hurt no one, nor yourselves, for it is pure and preserves pure. Do rightly justly, truly, holily

equally to all people in all things, that is the word of the Lord to tradesmen, merchants, husbandmen, seamen alike, then the life itself will preach. He urges Friends not to trade beyond their capacity nor to reach after more than they can perform. They are to keep to their word and day, and to the just measure and weight which avoids all oppression, striving to be rich in the life and kingdom of the world that has no end, rather than coveting this world's riches."

The records of the Society show that wherever there has been vital Quakerism it has produced just these results in business life. Very early on we hear of Gilbert Latey, the London Court tailor, who felt that he could no longer trick out his work with the trimmings that the vain world demanded, and, as a consequence lost most of his trade. William Edmondson, the apostle of Quakerism in Ireland, felt himself prevented "by a secret hand" from accepting a tempting business opening in Dublin, and a little later left shopkeeping and took a farm in order to bear his testimony against tithes. John Woolman, in the eighteenth century, "perceiving merchandise to be attended with much cumber," gave up a good position and learned the trade of a tailor, believing that by this means he would be able "to get a living in a plain way, without the load of great business."

The Fothergills are quoted by Dr. Rufus Jones as "excellent illustrations of the inner life of Quakerism during the period when it had almost no outer history." The father, John Fothergill (1676–1744), was an extremely humble and sensitively conscientious man. He felt great exercise of mind over "being involved in temporal concerns," for fear that the occupation which supplied his outward food might hinder him from true inward retirement to feel the Life of Truth for the daily supply of his soul. He enjoyed, however, "labouring with his hands in the Creation" on his beautiful Wensleydale fields, and he eventually learned how to get the supplies for both inward and outward needs, and when "a drawing" came to him to go forth on the Lord's work he was immediately ready to leave his "labour in the Creation" and to become "an instrument for the Spirit."

But the following of the inward guide has not always meant the giving up of a profitable business and choosing one where there was less "cumber." There have been not a few faithful and consistent Friends whose message to the world has been given

through their business life—by strict integrity in all their dealings and by sympathetic consideration for the interests of those in their employ—by showing in fact by their actions that their main object in business was not to gain profit for themselves, but to render service to others.

It is in this spirit that so many Quaker firms in later years have been pioneers in efforts to give time and opportunity to their workpeople for self-improvement and recreation, in endeavouring to provide them with comfortable homes and healthful conditions of labour and in the experiments they have made as to the best ways of giving their employees their right share in the profits and control of the business.

Edward Pease, of Darlington (1767–1858), "the Father of Railways," and his sons, John and Joseph, were typical examples of spiritually minded Friends who were also good men of business. Edward Pease left school when he was fourteen and entered his father's business of wool merchant and weaver. He was a very humble-minded and conscientious man, and his diaries testify to his endeavour to live in obedience to the Light within. Together with George Stephenson he opened the Stockton and Darlington Railway in 1825, and his son Joseph, who had ably assisted his father, carried on the undertaking. He purchased a coal mine to supply coal for transportation on the new railway and was so successful that ten thousand men were eventually employed in the various enterprises with which he was connected. In 1832 the passing of the Reform Bill made it possible for a Friend to enter Parliament, and in spite of strong opposition from his family, and from Friends, who feared the contaminations of public life, Joseph Pease agreed to the request of the electors of the Southern Division of Durham to stand as their candidate. He refused to make any personal canvas for votes or to spend any money upon the election, and announced that if he was returned he should maintain unflinchingly his principles and practice as a member of the Society of Friends. In spite of all this, he was elected, was admitted to Parliament on his affirmation in 1833, and remained there for nine years. He entered upon this public work at considerable sacrifice to his business and family life, and he carried out its duties in the same spirit of single-hearted consecration to the cause of Truth and Righteousness which he brought to his philanthropic and more definitely religious labours.

John Pease shared in the large industrial interests of his father and brother and possessed, like them, a great capacity for constructive work. Dr. Rufus Jones says of him : " He exerted a marked and powerful influence upon the men employed in the various lines of industry, and he always made the purity of his life felt wherever he mingled with people of any class. He was one of the original Directors of the first railway, and for many years he was heavily absorbed in business, but he gradually found the spiritual work, which he felt to be divinely laid upon him, increasing in volume and importance, and he thought it to be his duty to turn from the demands of secular business to the calls of the Spirit, ' desiring that nothing might hinder the performance of his duty to his God or his fellow-men.' . . . He engaged in an extensive religious journey on the Continent of Europe in 1842, accompanied by his father, and this was followed about a year later by a visit of two years' duration to the meetings of Friends in America. It was a heavy sacrifice for him to leave behind his deeply loved family, his wide philanthropic interests, his important business obligations, and to undergo the difficulties of extensive travel in the new and often unsettled parts of America. As the ' concern ' spread over his mind in the silence, he felt himself brought into the living presence of God. He adds : ' A shade of heavenly sweetness seemed to be cast over me, its light shone upon America and my way to the radiant portals of the celestial city appeared through that land.' . . . He continued throughout his life to use the great business talents with which he was endowed, but he received from his Monthly Meeting no less than forty-six certificates for definite religious service at home or abroad, and he may be taken as one of the finest, purest and most saintly public Friends of his time."

Joseph Pease was one of the first amongst nineteenth century English Friends to realize the service which lay before the Society in using its influence in the public life of the nation. Since then many others have devoted their time and talents to the same purpose. The best-known example of a Quaker politician is John Bright (1811–1889), who, throughout his whole public career, took his stand uncompromisingly on the central principles of our Quaker faith, and succeeded to a wonderful extent in carrying them into practice as the basis of a sound national policy.

Many other names might be added as examples of those who kept their spiritual vision undimmed and gave witness to their

faith, not by withdrawing from the world, but through the medium of their ordinary occupations and their human relationships. There was William Allen, the eminent chemist (1770–1843), whose life was largely devoted to opposing the slave trade and to relieving the suffering poor in Spitalfields. In 1814 he joined with Robert Owen and some others in buying cotton mills on the Clyde, in order to work out a scheme for the improvement of factory conditions. He also laboured for the abolition of capital punishment for small offences, and for prison reform, and, in later life, founded an agricultural colony with industrial schools at Lindfield, where he spent much time working out the details of housing and gardens and manual training in the schools. Besides all this, he paid seven religious visits to the Continent of Europe. No wonder that he writes in his diary : " I feel at times uneasy at being obliged to neglect my own private concerns, yet," he is able to add, " I am not without a comfortable degree of evidence that I am in the way of my duty."

Joseph Sturge, of Birmingham (1793–1859), whose work for peace has already been alluded to, is spoken of by Dr. Rufus Jones as " the consummate flower of Quakerism in the nineteenth century," and he further says of him : " The secret of the greatness of his life was to be found solely in his experience of Christianity as *a way of living* and in the ideals which attach inherently to fellowship with Christ. The brotherhood way of life was as normal and natural to him as breathing was, and he had formed a habit of human love that had become as instinctive with him as is the bee's love of honey."

This sentence is, doubtless, equally true of many other of these Quaker Saints—Samuel Gurney, the great banker (1786–1856), of whom one who was familiar both with his business temptations and with the beauty of his life, gave this fine testimony : " He is the only man I have seen who has passed through the burning fiery furnace without the smell of it in some way hanging about his garments " ; his sister, Elizabeth Fry (1780–1844), with her large family and pressing home claims, who was yet able to carry out, almost single-handed, such sweeping reforms in the prison system of England ; and other well-known names too numerous even to mention.

In recent years there has come to our Society a fresh insight into the close connection between the causes which produce

industrial strife and those which lead to war—a realization that the roots of war are deeply embedded in our national life, and that any effective work for peace must include such a reconstruction of our social and industrial system as shall secure for everyone the necessaries of life, leisure for recreation and for the cultivation of their minds, and the opportunity of a good education. The London Yearly Meeting of 1917 appointed a "War and Social Order" committee to investigate questions relating to these subjects and in 1918 it "accepted" eight propositions which this committee brought in under the title of "Foundations of a True Social Order."[1] From these it is clear that the Society is sincerely anxious to be guided in the problems of to-day, not by selfish motives, but with hearts open to the Spirit of Life which inspired the "First Publishers of Truth" and that Friends are still willing to make sacrifices if only they may get closer to their fellow men and understand better the purposes of God.

That these ideals are not only traditions of the past, but living principles at work to-day, even amongst our most distant and newest members, is shown by the following extract.

In an article on "Chinese Quakerism at Work" in the *Friends' Quarterly Examiner* for July 1921, Dr. Henry T. Hodgkin, speaking of a journey on the high road from Chengtu to Tung Chwan says: "It was my good fortune to travel with one of the students at the University who is nearing the end of his course, and who has been for a number of years under the influence of Friends in one school after another. He comes from quite a poor home, and would have had little chance of getting a good education if Friends had not been at work in his district. We had some long talks together on the road. Seldom has it been my privilege to talk with one who seemed to enter more eagerly into the thoughts that we were trying to express of the relation of God to man, and of men to one another, of the problem of reconciliation, and the meaning of forgiveness. I felt that I was joining heart to heart with one who knew what these great truths meant in his inner life, and that for him there could be no doubt that the voice that George Fox heard long years ago was a living word in his own soul to-day. I was not surprised when I heard later of the deep impression made upon a missionary by the tender way in which he dressed the wounds of the dirtiest and vilest, speaking to them

[1] See Appendix, p. 348.

the while of the love of Christ, nor of how, when many who loved him were ready to wait upon him hand and foot, he persisted in doing the meanest work for himself in the humblest way. Here was one who knew the joy of serving, and who had discovered it through inward fellowship with the Master and with the least of His brethren."

Speaking of the Chinese Yearly Meeting, Dr. Hodgkin says: "Some time had to be given to the consideration of certain big moral issues, such as the keeping of household slaves, and the possibility of the name of the Society being used by unscrupulous persons to cover an illicit trade in opium. . . . Perhaps the weightiest discussion in the meeting was that which was given to a concern that a statement of the views of Friends on the present state of China should be issued and widely circulated. It was felt that there was no other body in China that was standing for the pacifist way of life, and that the time had come when we should bring before the people of this country the truth which we believe to have been entrusted to Friends. . . . One speaker quoted instances from the Chinese classics to show how the way of love had been tried in the past and had not failed. It is very stimulating to be in a group of people who have so much in their own philosophy to support the Quaker view on peace and, as some of the older men spoke, one felt that they had certainly been doing their own thinking on this question, perhaps long before they ever heard of the Society of Friends."

The mention of China reminds us that the belief that there is a "seed" of God in every human soul, has always proved a strong incentive to Friends to carry the Gospel message to all nations. We have told in other chapters of the zeal of the messengers in the early days. In the middle periods, although there was no united effort, there were many individuals who heard the call to go abroad and who cheerfully obeyed, often facing difficulties which we can hardly realize in these days of quick travel and easy communication. There was Thomas Shillitoe (1754–1830), who, throughout his many journeyings, declares that it was his constant aspiration to become "like a cork on the ocean, wafted hither and thither as the Spirit of God should blow," Stephen Grellet (1773–1855), of whom Rufus Jones says that no one else in the Society at this period realized to the same extent that the whole world was the parish of a true Minister of the

Gospel, and there was Daniel Wheeler (1771–1839), of whose missionary journeys we have this striking testimony, again from the pen of Dr. Rufus Jones: "Through all this service [a visit to the islands in the Pacific Ocean], with its hardships and sacrifices, its immense risks and dangers, the consecrated man touched the deepest chords of human sympathy, shared the native life, put himself into fellowship with all who flocked around him, and gave both natives and missionaries simple and yet powerful interpretations of the Gospel of Christ. There was a freshness and reality to all he said. It reached the condition of all types and all levels of his varied listeners, and the testimonials of natives and missionaries make one feel that this Quaker Apostle, speaking in strict obedience to what his soul heard, brought a new revelation of the Light and Truth of God to all the islands which he visited during the four eventful years of his journeys."

About fifty-five years ago, the Society awakened to a fresh sense of its call to carry the message to foreign lands, and since that time many ardent "Publishers of Truth" have gone forth as the ambassadors of the Church under its Foreign Mission Association, and with the knowledge that they have behind them the prayers and the active sympathy and co-operation of Friends at home.

Anyone who reads the Fifty-Fifth Report of this Association must feel that the call of the present hour is louder and more insistent than ever before. The nations are stretching out their hands after God, and, if we, who know Him, fail to help them in their seeking, to whom shall they turn? Not only from India and Syria, China and Japan and Africa, but nearer home, in Europe and in our own land, there is a cry for help which is a challenge to the sincerity of our faith. New opportunities, new problems, new difficulties confront us on every hand. The war has shown us the failure of modern civilization to work out the law of love in industrial and national relationships. What is needed is a new way of life, and we believe that we have found that way.

Others are seeking with us the solution of the world's problems; how can we share with them the vision which we have seen?

Let us consecrate ourselves to the task; asking for a fresh baptism of that Spirit who inspired and guided our fathers; and a re-discovery of Christ as an indwelling Presence in our own

hearts, for so only can we go forward—humbled indeed under the sense of our past failures, but thrilled with a fresh vision of the great purposes of God, and with the realization that He "has shined in our hearts," giving us "the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ," and that He is calling us to the high privilege of making known this light to others through lives of self-forgetting love.

In the words of the London Yearly Meeting Epistle of 1922: "We dare set no limit to what God can do through us if we are faithful. Let us, however unworthy our past, go forth together to the work, joyfully believing that God can, in very deed, create through men the new world in which all are made one in Him."

APPENDIX

GENERAL ADVICES

(Read annually in all the Meetings of Friends in Great Britain.)

Take heed, dear Friends, we entreat you, to the convictions of the Holy Spirit, who leads, through unfeigned repentance, and living faith in the Son of God, to reconciliation with our Heavenly Father, and to the blessed hope of eternal life, purchased for us by the one offering of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Be earnestly concerned in religious meetings reverently to present yourselves before the Lord; and seek, by the help of the Holy Spirit, to worship God through Jesus Christ.

Prize the privilege of access by Him unto the Father. Continue instant in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.

Be in the frequent practice of waiting upon the Lord in private retirement, honestly examining yourselves as to your growth in grace, and your preparation for the life to come.

Be diligent in the private perusal of the Holy Scriptures; and let the daily reading of them in your families be devoutly conducted.

Be careful to make a profitable and religious use of those portions of time on the first day of the week which are not occupied by our Meetings for Worship.

Live in love as Christian brethren, ready to be helpful one to another, and sympathizing with each other in the trials and afflictions of life. Watch over one another for good, manifesting an earnest desire that each may possess a well-grounded hope in Christ.

Follow peace with all men, desiring the true happiness of all. Live not for yourselves but for others, seeking to undo

the heavy burdens and to let the oppressed go free ; remembering that it is your duty and privilege to labour for the physical, moral and spiritual well-being of your fellow-men.

With a tender conscience, in accordance with the precepts of the Gospel, take heed to the limitations of the Spirit of Truth in the pursuit of the things of this life.

Let your lights shine in lives of honest industry and patient love. Do your utmost to maintain yourselves and your families in an honourable independence, and, by prudent care in time of health, to provide for sickness and old age.

Maintain strict integrity in your transactions in trade, and in all your outward concerns. Guard against the spirit of speculation and the snare of accumulating wealth. Remember that we must account for the mode of acquiring, as well as for the manner of using, and finally disposing of our possessions.

Observe simplicity and moderation in your deportment and attire, in the furniture of your houses, and in your style and manner of living. Carefully maintain in your own conduct, and encourage in your families, truthfulness and sincerity ; and avoid worldliness in all its forms.

Guard watchfully against the introduction into your households of publications of a hurtful tendency ; and against such companionships, indulgences, and recreations, whether for yourselves or your children, as may in any wise interfere with a growth in grace.

Avoid and discourage every kind of betting and gambling, and such speculation in commercial life as partakes of a gambling character.

In view of the manifold evils arising from the use of intoxicating liquors, prayerfully consider whether your duty to God and to your neighbour does not require you to abstain from using them yourselves or offering them to others, and from having any share in their manufacture or sale.

In contemplating the engagement of marriage, look principally to that which will help you on your heavenward journey. Pay filial regard to the judgment of your parents. Bear in mind the vast importance, in such a union, of an accordance in religious principles and practice. Ask counsel of God ; desiring, above all temporal considerations, that your union may be owned and blessed of Him.

Watch with Christian tenderness over the opening minds of your children ; inure them to habits of self-restraint and filial obedience ; carefully instruct them in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures ; and seek for ability to imbue their hearts with the love of their Heavenly Father, their Redeemer, and their Sanctifier.

Finally, dear Friends, let your whole conduct and conversation be such as become the Gospel. Exercise yourselves to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men. Be steadfast and faithful in your allegiance and service to your Lord ; continue in His love ; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

QUERIES

(*Read and considered annually in the Monthly Meetings of Friends in Great Britain.*)

1st. What is the religious state of your Meeting ? Are you individually giving evidence of true conversion of heart, and of loving devotedness to Christ ?

2nd. Are your Meetings for Worship regularly held ; and how are they attended ? Are they occasions of religious solemnity and edification, in which, through Christ, our ever-living High Priest and Intercessor, the Father is worshipped in spirit and in truth ?

3rd. Do you " walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us " ? Do you cherish a forgiving spirit ? Are you careful of the reputation of others ; and do you avoid and discourage tale-bearing and detraction ?

4th. Are you individually frequent in reading, and diligent in meditating upon the Holy Scriptures ? And are parents and heads of households in the practice of reading them in their families in a devotional spirit, encouraging any right utterance of prayer or praise ?

5th. Are you in the practice of private retirement and waiting upon the Lord ; in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, making your requests known unto Him ? And do you live in habitual dependence upon the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit ?

6th. Do you maintain a religious life and conversation as becometh the Gospel? Are you watchful against conformity to the world; against the love of ease and self-indulgence; or being unduly absorbed by your outward concerns to the hindrance of your religious progress and your service for Christ? And do those who have children or others under their care endeavour, by example and precept, to train them up as self-denying followers of the Lord Jesus?

7th. Do you maintain a faithful allegiance to the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ as the one Head of the Church, and the Shepherd and Bishop of souls, from whom alone must come the true call and qualification for the ministry of the word? And are you faithful in your testimony to the freeness and spirituality of the Gospel dispensation?

8th. Are you faithful in maintaining our Christian testimony against all war as inconsistent with the precepts and spirit of the Gospel?

9th. Do you maintain strict integrity in all your transactions in trade, and in your other outward concerns? And are you careful not to defraud the public revenue?

10th. Do you, as disciples of the Lord Jesus, take a living interest in the social condition of those around you? What place do you give to personal service for others? Do you seek to understand the causes of social evils, and to take your right share in the endeavour to remove them?

11th. Are your Meetings for Church Affairs regularly held; and how are they attended? Are these Meetings vigilant in the discharge of their duties towards their subordinate Meetings, and in watching over the flock in the love of Christ? When delinquencies occur, are they treated timely, impartially, and in a Christian spirit? And do you individually take your right share in the attendance and service of these Meetings?

12th. Do you, as a Church, exercise a loving and watchful care over the young people in your different congregations; promoting their instruction in fundamental Christian truth and in the Scriptural grounds of our religious principles; and manifesting an earnest desire that, through the power of Divine grace, they may all become established in the faith and hope of the Gospel?

13th. Do you fulfil your part, as a Church and as individuals,

in promoting the cause of truth and righteousness and the spread of the Redeemer's Kingdom at home and abroad?

FOUNDATIONS OF A TRUE SOCIAL ORDER

(*Accepted by London Yearly Meeting in* 1918.)

1. The Fatherhood of God, as revealed by Jesus Christ, should lead us toward a Brotherhood which knows no restriction of race, sex, or social class.

2. This Brotherhood should express itself in a social order which is directed, beyond all material ends, to the growth of personality truly related to God and man.

3. The opportunity of full development, physical, moral and spiritual, should be assured to every member of the community, man, woman and child. The development of man's full personality should not be hampered by unjust conditions nor crushed by economic pressure.

4. We should seek for a way of living that will free us from the bondage of material things and mere conventions, that will raise no barrier between man and man, and will put no excessive burden of labour upon any by reason of our superfluous demands.

5. The spiritual force of righteousness, loving-kindness and trust is mighty because of the appeal it makes to the best in every man, and when applied to industrial relations achieves great things.

6. Our rejection of the methods of outward domination and of the appeal to force applies not only to international affairs, but to the whole problem of industrial control. Not through antagonism but through co-operation and goodwill can the best be attained for each and all.

7. Mutual service should be the principle upon which life is organized. Service, not private gain, should be the motive of all work.

8. The ownership of material things, such as land and capital, should be so regulated as best to minister to the need and development of man.

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